THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
1800

WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE

By

A. H. W.

(*Canada*)

Author of "He restoreth my soul"

"God, God!
With a child's voice I cry,
Weak, sad, confidingly—
God, God!
Thou knowest, eyelids, raised not always up
Unto Thy love (as none of ours are), droop
As ours, o'er many a tear."

MRS. BROWNING.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press
1913

BV4501
.W5963

Copyright, 1913
by
ELLIOT STOCK

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

150

©Cl.A357038

An Appeal to Those of the Faith

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION vii

CHAPTER I

"A HABITATION OF GOD" 1

CHAPTER II

"CHRISTIANS" 9

CHAPTER III

"SHALL HE DO ALSO" 31

CHAPTER IV

"BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW" . . 53

CHAPTER V

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?" . . 77

CHAPTER VI

"FATHER, I HAVE SINNED" . . . 100

CHAPTER VII

"A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR HIM" . . 121

PAGE

CHAPTER VIII

"I will Counsel Thee with Mine Eye upon Thee" 147

CHAPTER IX

"The Urim and the Thummim" . . . 174

CHAPTER X

"If I by the Finger of God" 200

CHAPTER XI

"Quit you like Men, Be Strong" . . . 224

CHAPTER XII

"Behold the Man" 254

INTRODUCTION

"Know ye not that ye are a Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the Temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." 1 Cor. iii. 16.

IN common usage, a temple is a building set aside for the service of the cause to which it is dedicated. A temple of art is for the service of art, a temple of music for the service of music, a temple of some Order for the service of that Order; and so a Temple of God is a building set aside for the service of the Living God.

Paul tells the early Christians that such they were, and as he spoke or wrote by inspiration—excepting when he states otherwise—we must admit that this definition is a fitting one. Then we must assume the position that a modern Christian is also a Temple of God and that his only office in life is to be a building fitted for God's service. If we of The Truth believe anything of the Inspired Scriptures we must believe this. If our minds and bodies are engaged in service which ignores or opposes Christ's coming Kingdom on Earth, we are either profaning His Temple, or we are not occupied by God the Perfect Builder, but by Satan the destroyer.

Perhaps we need the Scourge of Cords only, perhaps we need to be rebuilt, fitly framed together, so that we may each grow into a fit habitation for that service which shall be for Christ's redemptive work alone.

If we be sincere we shall never be satisfied with our attainments until we arrive at such a status that it would be no sarcasm to term us Christians. We shall not—as some of us do in our new-born zeal—be so foolish as to turn our backs on the organized Church of Christ because it is not quite immaculate, but we shall, like the Master, remain therein and do our best in assisting to make it, and ourselves, more nearly so. We shall "Tarry in the City" until we be endowed with gifts from on high.

Alas, we now "Tarry," but the gifts, how rare they are! We receive not because we comply not with the demands of the testing command, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." This is a bitter lesson for most of us to learn, bitter as the waters of Marah. Obedience is the tree which shall sweeten it to our taste. We shall still hear the voice of Jehovah God saying, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his eyes, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon thee, which I have put upon the Egyptians; for I am Jehovah that healeth thee."

This lesson gives us strong reason for weighing

the manifold needs of those who are less fortunate than ourselves. It is in the degree to which our fruitful sympathies are attuned to the needs of the suffering children of the race, that we have become fitted to receive the Gift of the Spirit in our service. Nor crying, nor pain, must be permitted or tolerated by us if we be in Christ's service. We, having plenty, and living in comparative happiness, forget the degeneracy and squalor of those who are less fortunate. Our ears are so dulled by the jingling sounds of our social and commercial world that the half-inarticulate moan of distress scarcely reaches our consciousness. When we ignore or forget this sad, moaning cry, we are not Temples of the Living God, but of Satan, the destroyer. If we are in Christ's service we shall work with Him and not ignore or forget, nor shall we work against the interest of His redemptive mission. Thus spake the Voice from out the Throne, "Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more; the first things are passed away." Thus our service is simply and lucidly set forth as being to assist the Redeemer of the world in removing misery and sin of any description. This is the only legitimate temple service of the soul at the present epoch.

When we see this plainly we shall realize that we are ignorant in mind and hungry in soul, and we shall arise and approach our forgiving Father and cry in true contrition, "Father I have sinned." Already His pitiful eye is scanning the horizon, watching our tardy return to sanity and home. He will be moved with compassion when He sees that we also are moved with compassion towards the suffering and deprived children—His little ones. Consciousness of His approval will give us steadfastness of purpose in our endeavours, and we shall feel that our labour will not be in vain, be it great or small. If we truly believe in the Gospel of our Lord and Redeemer, we shall be a power indeed in His service. Himself has said, "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also." This is a strangely unappreciated promise of our beloved Elder Brother, our Priest, our King. It is one of the greatest crimes, if not the greatest and blackest crime of Christendom. Not only is it insulting to the offerer of this splendid attainment—this He would forgive—but when we dwarf our every faculty, debauch and brutalize our every instinct, and refuse the helpful gifts of the Spirit, we hasten our own soul-suicide and that of the human race generally. We seem to prefer to be half-paralyzed beggars for our Creator's bounty, than to become Sons of God with attainments in keeping with the dignity of that relationship.

We are judged by our works. If they be of the

Father they abide, and we are rewarded by Him; but even if we were not in any special sense rewarded we should still be vastly gainers by noble experience. True is the saying that "Virtue is its own reward." Deprivation and thoughtless selfishness alike produce degeneracy of a people. Against these evils we must strive night and day in agony of tears and prayers, or retain our Cain-like instincts. Sons of God, Brothers of Christ, are those who have become cleansed from this blighting *taint of Cain*. When we look into these things with an unflinching eye, we shall see that we are not fit for eternal life or to be called Sons of God. Eternal life is the reward—or result of obedient unity with God in His serial order of bringing good out of evil, light out of darkness, order out of chaos, of bringing about the redemptive climax of fallen men being changed into Sons of God. Only by assisting with our best efforts, poor though they may seem, in this Christlike service, do we approach the entrance to eternal life.

If we are sincere in our efforts we shall be strengthened by careful preparation, and we shall trust in the guiding eye of the Father. We shall learn to be absolutely obedient to the Divine call, no matter where it may lead us. We shall, with the Urim and the Thummim upon our breastplates, be in a position to call upon our God in every extremity that can possibly arise in our willing service towards the Kingdom of Christ on earth.

We shall thus be able to "Stand like the brave with your face to the foe." "Wherefore take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

But we shall never be able to attain to this exalted status unless we learn first to see our Redeemer as He really is, and allow His principles to inspire and permeate our motives, and purify our service. We must recognize Him as our only hope, as the only Author of eternal life, as the Way in which we may be brought into conformity with the original state of our being in which we were pronounced to be good. We are to be made pure and innocent by conforming to the image of the Blessed One. We shall thus become spiritually fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit whose temple we must indeed be, if we are to live eternally in the glad service of the Most High.

"A Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep,
A Shepherd both mighty to save and to keep,—
Yes, this is the Shepherd we need,
And he is a Shepherd indeed!
A Pilot who knoweth the dangers at hand,
A Pilot who bringeth *all* vessels to land,
Yes, this is the Pilot we need,
And He is a Pilot indeed!
Is He yours?
Is this Saviour, who loves you, yours?"

A. R. Habershon.

WHICH TEMPLE YE ARE

Which Temple Ye Are

CHAPTER I

"A HABITATION OF GOD"

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them. And he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh; for through him we both have our access in one spirit unto the Father. So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; in whom each several building fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." EPHESIANS ii. 10, 17 to 22.

Also we would quote the warning message of Jesus Christ to the Ephesians in the vision of John, "I know thy works, and thy toil and steadfastness, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast patience and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. But I have this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." Also Christ's promise to another Church, thus, "He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with my Father in His throne."

To be a "Habitation of God" is certainly a high calling. To be occupied by God the Father, Creator, Preserver, is safety indeed. To be active in His service is to be on the highway to ultimate success notwithstanding all the discouragements which may assail us. No matter how sincere we may be in our convictions of the reality of our Faith, still, we must allow that we are very far from the status of Jesus the Christ. We cannot help perceiving how very far we are from being suitable for real, holy service, service that is peculiar to the closer relationship which should exist between ourselves and Christ in His redemptive work, service that will entitle us to be classed as Sons of God. True, we do at times feel a sort of faith in the eternal Father and His Son, our Redeemer. True, we do at times have vague desires that the actual Spirit of God should permeate human affairs. These good impulses come faintly throbbing through our too lethargic souls, but alas, how little effort that is altogether good, results from these, perhaps only undefined and vague desires!

It is necessary, then, that we should awaken from this state of partial coma in which our moral expressions are but the disconnected mutterings of a sleeping spirit in its restlessness. Thank God that it is this, and not actual imbecility of soul! Thank God for the infinite privilege that is still ours—to arise, stand on our feet, and begin

to fill our true position as Sons of God! If we are to be citizens with the saints, fitly framed together by our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we must look into His economies more fully, and we shall soon convince ourselves how deplorably remote we are from His standard of citizenship. We shall find ourselves most unworthy of the privileges of true sonship, or true citizenship—of that indwelling of the Spirit which is the result of sonship, and which makes us true citizens of the Father's house. In His house dwell souls of varied attainments. We shall possess that we can receive; we shall be occupied by that which we invite and attain. "In my Father's House are many mansions [abiding places]; I go to prepare one for you." He is preparing one for me (I feel that I know this) in keeping with my soul's earth life. Each of us has this hope. We cannot have the continued life unless we become homes for the Holy Spirit. Are we so pure in mind and conduct that we can invite our Father and His One Perfected Son to come in and eat of the same bread that we eat of? Will they come in and "sup" with us on terms of fellowship? Can they? Are we individually in that blessed state of purity that would warrant the companionship of these illustrious Guests? Are we carrying out the design of the Creator perfectly, as we have light to know good from evil? Would we always be willing to ask direct advice from Him on our private business

or our social affairs? Our business and our social affairs are by our birthright (rebirth) the Lord Christ's redemptive issues. We cannot go through any ordinary routine employment that is not part and parcel of the ascent or descent of the soul of the race. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." Are we walking in helpful unity with this prepared plan, or are we hindering the completion of the redemptive scheme? We are each of us in our daily vocations doing either the one or the other. Sometimes I have a most miserable and ashamed feeling come over my inmost soul that it was our unworthy discipleship, seen by our Redeemer with prophetic ken, that amazed Him so much in Gethsemane's awful hour. Mark tells us that he "began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled." He sadly complained to his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." If the long-suffering Master were to come visibly to-day to inquire into the workmanship of each of us, from prelate to the humblest, would He have cause to be amazed and filled with sorrow? We cannot see Him with our dimmed eyes, therefore we say, "The Lord tarrieth." But not so. We may not rest in this false security—cowards that we are—for we have not the assurance that He tarrieth. On the contrary we know that He is in constant knowledge, and has complete record of

our thoughts and workmanship. This cannot conduce to soul serenity, unless we be most childlike in our fixed hope, and determined endeavour, to grow Christwards! If we become as little children in the Kingdom, we shall greatly rejoice when we realize that our Elder Brother has us always in His constant care, that He can, and does, send ministering angels to guard and strengthen us in our weakness and timidity. But I am afraid that we hide our faces from Him. I am sorely afraid that we despise His teaching and commands. Well might the seer-poet sorrowfully wail forth the complaining dirge:

"He was despised, and forsaken of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised; and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

This saddest of songs tells us of the suffering Messiah. Not of His typical but speedily ended suffering on the Cross alone, but of this amazing load of sorrow which has weighed so

heavily on His consecrated loving heart all down through these long centuries, and which bears heavily upon Him still. Small wonder that He will look coldly upon some of us when we shall unctuously cry, "Lord, Lord, did we not do many great things in thy name?" If we wish to receive the "Well done" instead of the "I never knew you," we had better question each his own heart, as to how this testing time is going to affect us.

There is a vital question that we must each ask himself to-day. It is this: Am I in my heedless folly helping to continue the suffering of the Saviour? Not only does He say, "As much as ye did it, or did it not, unto one of these my little ones, ye did it or did it not unto me," but it is given to His patient heart actually to feel this joy or woe; this growing hope and joy of the children, or the continued misery that we in our indifference so cruelly allow. He must feel it as a loving sensitive mother feels the joy or pain of her happy or suffering child. By how much greater depth of feeling of tenderness is He sure to be possessed! So we are scientific and rational in feeling miserable and ashamed in the extreme when we know that with our modern enlightenment we are still allowing Christ to be despised, and His work to be ignored or in part ignored. Though the children of misfortune be not objects of interest to the masses of Christendom, still, it is strange indeed that we do not heed the lingering agony of the Son of Man!

We are not in this chapter so much drawing attention to the helpful service of a Christian in this or that specific line, as to the nature of this so desirable union between Christ and a fellow child of God. "I in the Father, ye in Me." We may not with impunity, or hope of eventual sonship to the Father, believe with the intellect in the Saviour of men's souls, and yet not be united with Him in heart. We are told that the demons thus believe. Unity with the heart of the Son of Man and God brings us into that soul union which tends to instruct us in our every thought and action. We come at length to see that all our earthly duties must be done as in the actual presence of God. In time we shall feel this Presence, not so much as that of a judge ready to convict, as that of a loving, parental, instructing security, constant and gentle as a mother is to her child. We shall always rejoice to do as we are instructed. If sometimes the duty appears to our child-eyes to be too great for us, we shall be reminded that the victory is not always to the strong. And sometimes we shall be counselled only to stand still and wait—which is at times one of the most difficult of tasks for an earnest spirit to perform. We shall know that God the Father has said, "I will guide thee with mine eye upon thee." We may always hear the assuring, comforting promise of the crowned Son of Man,

All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and

on the earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you; and lo I am with you always (all the days) even unto the end of the world (the consummation of the age).

It is this interunion of the Godhead with ourselves, childlike though we be, aye, must be, that will purify us, give us serenity of soul, earnestness of purpose, and eventually eternal life. Our workmanship will be approved, we shall be in process of becoming as a race, as a nation, as individuals, fitly framed together, a fit habitation of God.

"I hear at morn and even,
At noon and midnight hour,
The choral harmonies of heaven
Earth's Babel tongues o'erpower.
Then, then I feel that he,
Remembered or forgot,
The Lord is never far from me,
Though I perceive Him not."

J. Montgomery.

CHAPTER II

CHRISTIANS

"The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."
ACTS xi. 26.

"Wherefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye scoffers, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem." ISAIAH xxviii. 14.

"For Jehovah hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets; and your heads, the seers, hath he covered. And all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed; and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned." ISAIAH xxix. 10, 11, 12.

IT would seem from prophetic warnings and exhortations, that sleepiness was a natural besetment of the Church, old and new. Awake! these prophets continually cry. It was ever the same theme with each prophet and with each people. The awakening of a people to existing wrong conditions was the aim of all prophetic effort. Jonah was sent to awaken the people of Nineveh, by warning them of their impending doom. This Jonah did so effectually that this mighty city of sinful souls bowed before the great God of Israel in sackcloth and ashes. Their belief

was real to the heart's core. Their repentance was desperately sincere. They cried mightily unto Jehovah God, hoping that He might deliver them from this avenging Nemesis that hung gloomily over the sin-sodden city. Paul in his letter of instruction to the Romans, after urging them to be honourable and kind in all their dealings one with another, makes a further call on their attention, thus: "And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awaken out of your sleep; for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed." It would seem to be Paul's opinion that salvation was a thing of awakening to attainment, "For now it is nearer," he said. These Romans, like ourselves, lived in the world among other men with whom of necessity they came constantly in contact. It was of the manner and spirit of this common everyday intercourse amongst their fellows, that Paul had mainly been speaking. Paul had been a man of the world, and he knew his world well. He was a philosopher. *Now*, he was also a Christian. He could not tolerate or understand a type of discipleship which did not purify men's dealings with other men. So he concludes that they must be sleeping and must require awakening.

The Messiah had come and had left behind Him His teaching, and was gone to His Father by way of the Cross. Paul had conversed with Him from out His hidden throne. It took Paul a long time

to conquer his thorn in the flesh, but by the teaching of Jesus he knew that it must be conquered in order to obtain his crown of eternal life. Until he had conquered, he knew himself as feeding on husks in a far-off country. So he urged the new converts also, to realize their state and to strive to cleanse their own ways.

What is a Christian, by contrast with the non-Christian? We speak of States, perhaps long passed away, as having been heathen or pagan nations. Just what is it that we mean? Do we mean that they built idolatrous houses, ate idolatrous food, wore idolatrous clothing, or just what is it that we do mean? As wealth stands for so much that is great, perhaps we mean to imply that these old pagan States used idolatrous coins as money. No! some wise one assures us, that is not it; the men themselves were pagans. Oh! we say, that is what is meant. Now we know that it was the *men* of these States who were pagans, and not their homes, or food, or clothing, or even their beloved coins. Perhaps it was then their physique that was pagan. I think not, as their mummies are pretty much the same shape as ourselves—and we are Christians. So we are forced to the position that it was something that they held as a belief in their minds, which gave reason for this distinctive appellation. It had to do with some mental conception, and their consequent attitude towards something outside of

themselves and their fellow-men. If we follow up the matter, we shall find that a heathen or pagan State is composed of individuals who conceive that there is some force or influence working in the world, which is to be feared, appeased, etc. They see the many marvels of nature, they, quite reasonably, ascribed these influences to the various prominent objects such as the sun, moon, stars, and the wonderful and intricate life in animal sustenance and reproduction. Their minds are like the mind of the infant expanding to meet the wonders which surround it, wonders which have long ceased to interest its parent of maturer experience. The infant mind is peering out into its new environment. The pagan soul peers out through its unprejudiced eyes into its unexplored empire. Some of the ritual that these children of ignorance set for themselves—not knowing better—was what would be for us obscenity, abomination. But then some of the habits of an innocent and lovely little child would cause us to be confined in a prison or an asylum for the insane.

Come to a higher stage. Abraham saw God in nature more clearly than his immediate contemporaries. The religion of types and shadowings followed in the wake of this clearer vision of the Father of the Faithful. Rules of life were set up, oblations were contritely offered when any of these laws were broken, and also as worship. This was well. In time this discipline produced a few men

with the power of still clearer and farther-reaching vision—the prophets. These seers perceived that men were drifting far afield from the vision of their much lauded, but little obeyed, Father Abraham. They saw men turning the eye of faith in God away from Him to the ritual, which had only been instituted to remind them of Him. *Only* the seers perceived God in them now. These seers also saw with their clearer vision the materialistic trend of all religious exercise, their own not excepted. They knew that where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint. I think that they also saw that God was not a Being, like as a pagan ruler, to be appeased by the offering of material objects, but that eventually He must, and would, have living men, with living souls; men far in advance of their (the prophets) contemporaries, in spiritual conception. They each conceived (inspired by the Spirit) the idea that in time the Infinite would produce a Racial Man, one who would understand His place and responsibility in the universe. They saw that by the order of spiritual things He must come. I and my fellow believers in the Christian faith feel that we know that He did come. So now we know just what a Real Man is. The pagan philosophers, not having the inner vision so clearly, sought in all (to them) conceivable ways to bring the children of the Race to some higher standard of mind and resultant conduct. One, at least, saw clearly enough to

join with these Hebrew prophets in foretelling that a Just One must eventually be born of men, who would be competent to set all wrongs right, make all crooked places straight. This hope was well founded, for some three or four centuries later, this Just One came. A century before this Just One, whom Plato foretold, hung upon the Cross, Virgil, the poet-seer, sung in prophetic strain:

> "The Child shall purge
> Our guilt stains out and free the land from dread,
> How all things joy to greet the rising Age."

Did He redeem the people from error? Has He set all wrongs right? Are all stains purged out as yet? Alas, it does not seem to have been sufficient that He came! Nor was it all-potential that He showed men how a Just Man should live, aye, and die if need be. It did not seem to be convincing enough to sinful men that He laid down a faultless code of ethics by which men should learn to live sanely. The awful failure of the Just One to effect this cure is very discouraging to Those of the Faith. The prophets and philosophers and poet-seers were correct as to His coming, but as to setting the world right, can any one argue that it has been accomplished as yet? Well has the poet sung, "God 's in His heaven, All 's right with the world," but we must read those lines through a poet's eye, an eye that often looks past the near into the far, past the warp and woof to

the beautifully wrought, finished fabric. Mostly all of us must look closely to the weaving of our small piece to see that it is well done. We are not all joyous-throated skylarks, rising, and singing heavenward. To do the simple duty really well is high exercise of soul. It is in this humble endeavour that we often sadly cry, Can God make beauty out of the tangled threads of our too faulty workmanship?

We believe that the Son of Man came, was perfected by the things which He suffered, showed His perfected manhood to the children of men, taught His code of ethics. He did not fit in with the ritualistic thought-trend of His native contemporaries, so they crucified Him on a cross with other troublesome persons. But "God 's in His heaven, All 's right with the world." So we may look with the poet's eye on this humiliating failure of the Man, Jesus of Nazareth, being as but the victorious entrance to the greatest, vastest, of dual thrones. He was raised to the Throne of Christ Jesus the Redeemer. His Kingdom is in Heaven, and on Earth. So tremendous was this event that the sympathetic mother-earth draped herself in night and shivered for the guilt of her poor foolish children. The last despairing cry of the Man Jesus had arisen to High Heaven; the answer came in the rending of the veil of the typical temple. God had *not forsaken* the Son of Man; He had *translated* Him into His wider kingdom.

The World Tragedy was over. He must needs die to complete the type of the old law of oblation; to satisfy the ritualistic trend of this people. The rending of the veil began a new era in manhood. *Hereafter a man shall stand or fall by the standard of the code of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Mankind.* To keep that code is to be a Christian. There is no other law under heaven whereby a soul may live eternally. And as this code pertained almost entirely to our relations between and towards one another, it is one of the gravest and most deadly of mistakes to allow any other class of thought to force itself in between our study of this code, and our hope of continued life. Dogma never saved a soul's life; it never will, it is unscriptural as well as unscientific to believe this foolishness. The Jews who were steeped in the tempestuous waters of dogma, marvelled that Jesus should speak with such assurance. But He answered them thus: "My teaching is not mine but His that sent me. If any man willeth to do His will he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself." So it would seem as though one must first *do* the will of God as Christ taught it, before he can have a clear vision of what true teaching really is. But for a sane man who has never studied or followed the teaching of Jesus the Christ to begin his career of eternal life by the study of a tedious dissertation on creeds, is inconceivable folly. As though a child should not eat

until he understood thoroughly his digestive organs and the chemical properties of his food, and the probability of such and such foods being suitable, or as regards their proving to be easily assimilated by his system. Christ said that He was the Bread of Life. He also said that we must become as little children.

To return—we find that a pagan state is composed of persons who worship the great God through some of His (to them) most noticeable creations. Each individual mind is an integral part of this explanatory definition regarding their state. It is really the touch-point between such souls, and between such souls and their God. If you read their history carefully you will find I think, without exception, that their intercourse between themselves, and between themselves and other such people, was entirely influenced by this one governing principle; that is, their mental vision of their relation between themselves and that Influence and Power which they found in a measure concrete in certain natural objects. The crudest study of mythology tells us this. They have also immortalized those fellow-beings who most nearly stood for the (at the time) Ideal Man, the Superman. They strove to emulate him. The poets sang their most heroic epics of his doings. We can only conceive of God as we can read His hand in His created objects. The sun and moon arose with god-like precision and regularity, there-

fore they were gods, etc. There must be motherly influences that breathed upon them and kissed them so tenderly in the aerial world above them; thus we may account for the "Queen of heaven," etc.

Diogenes has immortalized the fact, that philosophy is not physical comfort or sensual luxury. Others of these early schools have striven to teach that true philosophy lay only in culture and character. The effect of this wise teaching permeated the early Christian Church, and is a fully accepted theory to-day. Some other schools of philosophy were at the two poles of truth, and neither quite in the right place. The Stoics said, "A man must not demand, nor should he require, or desire pleasant sensations, and must not recognize either pain or joy in himself, as it were weakness to do so." The Epicurean said, "A man had better live in a way that would yield him all the pleasantest sensations that are conceivable. That to avoid all pain, and to obtain all possible sensuous enjoyment was the greatest good; that it were foolish to do otherwise." Into this field, into which these divers beliefs and philosophies, pagan, and well-nigh empty Jewish ritualistic religions had been incorporated until it was a strange conglomerate of a semi-religious mass of a many-hued mental character, came another Sower of seed. He sowed His good, absolutely perfect seed; and covering it in with careful hand, left it to grow, and went away

for a while. The watchers said, "Master, some one hath sown tares also, shall we weed them out?" He said, "No! let the good and bad grow together until the time of the harvest." This field of wheat and tares has been growing together for nearly two thousand years, and the time of the harvest is nearing—is now. Already we see the separating process beginning. The good seed shall be found to have produced splendid ethics, and splendid desire in man to follow theory by conduct in keeping with this standard of theoretical ethics. The tares shall be cast out from the beneficent field of wheat. This is now being done. All these tares shall eventually be cast out into the fire that they reproduce no more for ever. The Good Sower did not forget His field. Some say to-day, as was foretold, "My Lord tarrieth." Does He tarry? Our Lord Christ is in absolute oneness with His Father, therefore He never hasteneth nor does He tarry. He said He would come for the harvest, and the harvest is beginning; therefore He is here. Those who hope for His coming may realize their hope; those who fear His coming have reason now for their fear.

If we cling persistently to the teaching of the Founder of our Faith—and why in all reason should we not do so?—and allow nothing else of preconceived, or shall we say hereditary, character to become mixed in with it, perhaps some of us will be amazed to find just where we each stand

under this separating examination. We find that the teaching of Christ Jesus is a great kindly search-light which untiringly throws out its rays of hope to men: we, who are now struggling for our very eternal lives from out the cruel rocks of human made dogmas, the fogs of our pernicious customs, and the wild waters of useless fanaticism. We have a perfectly safe life-line if we choose to grasp it, viz., the teaching of Jesus, the Redeemer of men's souls—aye, and bodies. This is quite sufficient without any person's carefully wrought out amplifications. A Christian can have no reasonable excuse for writing or preaching on religious subjects excepting to draw the attention of his fellows to what the Founder of the Faith Himself taught. "Back to Christ" must be the motto of all religious literature or preaching. "In His name" must be the motto of all workers, of all sorts and conditions. Sometimes I feel like wishing that all the written words in this planet, especially in our Empire, save only His, could be hidden from us for a decade. Perhaps some of us would then begin to get a faint glimmering by that time, of just what He did teach as to the way to obtain eternal life; as to what it is to be fitting temples of God. We should begin to see dimly that spiritual economies can in no wise be separated from social and political economies. We should find that the examination of our attitude towards each other is the only judgment that shall find us

wanting or true. Of course, I am speaking only to those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, or think that they do. *Now*, the watchers are not even dimly seen by us, in our befogged vision, but they are amongst us nevertheless, seeing into our every intention, even more than our every action. The Sower of the good seed has returned as He promised. He remains for the present just behind a very thin veil. He is superintending the operation of separating the wheat from the tares, and freeing it from all chaff. All honour to the many human souls who are patiently endeavouring to assist the watchers and their (and our) Master in the separating and sorting process. May God in His redeeming mercy see fit to grant them skill!

And so we who call ourselves Christians, believe that this Real Man came, first, some two thousand years ago; this Sower of the good seed. He had been long hoped for. Some wise men from the East came, thinking to find Him underneath where the star should lead. The wise men found Him there. He had not tarried, nor had He hastened. Once more the star stands sentinel. This time it stands sentinel over our nation, this island country whose united Church and State surely is the natal place of the New Kingdom, this adopted home of the Christian faith, this successor of the Old Law. *What shall we do with this Christ?* Last time He appeared we crucified Him. But this time the question is not what shall we do with Him, but

what will He do with us? This is the one burning religious question of Christendom to-day. Shall we call upon the rocks to fall upon us, or shall we go to meet Him with great rejoicing? When we in our hearts acknowledge that this Real Man came, then does our judgment begin. Do we not solemnly chant, "We believe that thou shalt come to be our judge." Also, "O Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world; Have mercy upon us."

When we examine ourselves by the light of His teaching we shall surely be ready to cry not only with the lips but from our soul agony, "Have mercy upon us!" When we acknowledge Him, not only does our personal examination begin, but our personal responsibility is augmented. We may already have been faithful workers in some favourite social scheme, or we may have worked in a highly moral patriotic spirit for the improvement of the individual, in order that we may lift the nation, in order hat we may be supreme as a nation. This spirit must be subjected to the fires of purification. It must be made free from selfish motives and instincts. This will cause much sincere heart searching, but if we are to be a Christian people, in deed, as well as in word, we must submit to those crucial fires. Christ must first judge us, then free us from our sins. A nation cannot sin of itself. A depraved nation is, of course, a united whole of a number of depraved men. A strong righteous State is composed of

"Men, high-minded men, who know their rights, and knowing dare maintain." The State of Christendom should in all reason be composed of "Men, Christlike men, who know His will, and knowing dare maintain." Do any of us dare maintain the actual high standard of Christ's régime? No need to ask. *Then is Christendom Christian?* That is a question that we are compelled to ask. We feel compelled to ask another question regarding our arrogant Christendom. *Is she ashamed of her Founder and His régime?* The clergy of all shades and religions, and also laymen, are expected to write or talk about religion in either a technical or emotional manner. This is their speciality. If we might enter the Eternal Avenue via this or that clergyman, pastor, or layman's vicarious acknowledgment of Christ, it might be easier for us; but we cannot do this. But, does the man in his office, in his shop, or market, or the political or popular journalist, or the man in any public vocation, consult with his client, customer, buyer, seller, or reader, as to what bearing the transactions, events, or topics, will have on the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven? Would we dare to bring up the subject, at least without an apology? Are we ashamed of the Christian principle? Are we ashamed to discuss these vital subjects in a commonplace, everyday, and wholly rational way? So we ask, Is Christendom ashamed of true Christianity?

She stands self-convicted of one of two things by this silence regarding the most important constitutional issue of the day. She convicts herself of, either being *ashamed of the Founder of our Faith* and the régime of His coming Kingdom, or, *she is ashamed of herself* in the face of this standard of ethics, this "Do unto others as ye would have them do to you," this "Bear ye one another's burdens." These commands hurt like a knife when we apply them to everyday transactions and conduct and theory. So we tacitly agree to keep them well out of sight in everyday life, and fetch them out on a Sunday for a little soothing spiritual exercise for our half-paralyzed souls; and we piously call ourselves Christians! Blessed Sunday service that calls our attention to spiritual matters, at least, one day in seven! Blessed little reminders that come to us at times throughout the week in the way of evening service, prayer, etc.! Some of us, I know, are not ashamed of the mission of the Redeemer; but nearly all of us should be ashamed of our poor discipleship. I rather believe that the latter reason is the true cause of our silence; at least, I feel that my own guilt lies mostly there. One, if he be sensitive, does shrink from the Sermon on the Mount as if it were scorching fire; it is a hard thing to face and live. So we like to study it by proxy, and allow our indulgent pastors to deal us out a little at a time at the Sunday service, or read a little occasionally in some approved

religious book. One would think that this thesis of Christ were dynamite. Is it spiritual dynamite? Would it were applied and fired by the Spirit of Conviction, so as to blow to atoms much that we now count dear, but which is in a Christian state, a disgraceful shame!

We must never, however, lose sight of any extenuating circumstances in regard to our guilty shame, or we should become too much discouraged, and we should faint by the way. We do feel our weakness so much at times that we really pity ourselves. So does our elder Brother pity us all the time. We may be relieved to know that He can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and has been tempted in all points as we are tempted.

We may well believe that sleepy indifference to Christ's authoritative teaching is largely due to our present day complicated business and social life. Our mode of life leaves little time, or quiet, for the meditation that is required to adjust the mind of mankind to saner determinations. The near always rises large before us, and often a small object hides from our vision a chain of sunlighted mountain peaks. And so our small, near day is hiding from us the radiance of the eternal day to be attained.

If social reform, alone, is the ultimate of our efforts, we shall fail. If social reform is approached with the idea, first, of bringing about that condition wherein each human being may be clothed

and fed and made whole in body; and then, in order that we may simplify our mode of living in such a way as to have reasonable time and opportunity to make provision wisely and sanely for our souls also; shall we fail then? We shall by a calm study find that the teaching of Jesus is the sanest, the most scientific and far-seeing reach of thought on social matters that has yet been, or can be, conceived of. We shall find that the fires which now scorch us into an ignominious silence concerning these teachings are but the cleansing fires which are calculated to make us pure in heart so that we may see God more nearly as Jesus saw Him. If dynamite some of them be, let us use them, not to destroy our fellows, but to burst asunder some of our rock-incrusted institutions. Satan is ever present striving to keep our minds in painful activity on lesser things to the exclusion of holier thoughts.

I am told that in commercial houses, at times affairs become so hopelessly muddled that they cannot possibly be straightened out by the managers themselves. That is reasonable, as they have themselves caused or made the trouble. I am given to understand that an expert is called in who carefully and judicially analyzes the business methods and makes many changes regardless of the firm's opinion or desire. He often brings success out of that which had seemed a complete failure. I wish we could allow an expert to take a strong

wise hand in our nation to-day and make many changes regardless of prejudice or personality. If we were really a Christian people we would ask the Master of our lives to come in and do this for us. But I doubt whether we should welcome Him cordially. The Father gave Him all authority in Heaven and on earth. He is now engaged in this expert work, whether we want Him or not; if we have a little spare time at our command, we may well look about us at strange things happening to the very foundations of our social, religious, and political structure.

The Father has given the kingdoms of the world, to be in the end, Christ's. If we be really Christians we are helping to bring it about. If Mammon is our ruler, then by all means let us adore him and obey all of his iniquitously selfish commands. If Christ Jesus is to be our ruler, let us by all means adore Him and obey His unselfish and life-preserving commands. We cannot serve both. He warned us of this double dealing ages ago, with prophetic intuition. By our fruits shall we be known. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven." Unto some who do mighty works He will say, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

We cannot too often impress upon ourselves

and our fellow human beings of to-day, especially those of the Faith, that Christ's Kingdom is coming, and coming *now*. Who, that reads prophecy and the trend of modern thought, can deny that unusual upheavals in world thought are taking place: that gigantic moral struggles are *now* in process? Dogmatic religion and hereditary customs, which have become rigid as fixed laws, are making unprecedented efforts to retain their strangling clasp on awakening, emancipating humanity. Unprecedented, because it is wholly a moral mental struggle. Satan has long enough kept these false and, in themselves, trivial, formulas and customs, and hereditary coarse greedinesses, playing about with illusive false lights, and with fantastic paraphernalia which at once awe and captivate the unsophisticated believer. And so we go sleepily on through the passing years. We are really to be pitied.

The inequality of the distribution of the earth's products makes a condition of strained effort on the part of the mass of Christendom so great, that they mostly forget that there is a God, or that He ever had a Beloved Perfected Son, or that we were ever commanded to listen to Him and live, or refuse to hear Him and die. The ingenuity of the Satanic reign is one of the most interesting of historic subjects. The holy wars, the trifling differences of opinion on certain religious non-essentials, the lust of power, the lust of greed, the pressing

need of the poor, the ambitions and attractions of the mass, the hateful arrogance of our more favoured people, the wonderful intricacies of society life, this overstrain of nearly every body—these things veil our vision, hide realities, hinder the Kingdom of Heaven, and prevent us from being worthy of our name as a religious nation.

It would be a good exercise of mind if we were each to endeavour to acquire a knowledge of the different great schemes of religion, such as Buddhism, the Moslem faith, or any of the old pagan religions, and see if there is to be found one that better fits our real belief. If we find one that we feel that we can fully endorse, and live up to, and thus obtain eternal life, by all means let us hasten to adopt it. If we, by chance, should thus make ourselves acquainted with Christianity, and find in it that which appeals to our highest, noblest instincts, as the one true way to eternal life, then why do we not adopt the teaching of the Founder? If we be a pagan people let us at once set up our gods; but, if we be a Christian people, let us at once set up the Christ. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." *Gentlemen* in our land do not countenance cheating at games of any sort. May a *Christian* be untrue to his faith with impunity? Himself said, "I will profess I never knew you."

The disciples of Christ Jesus were first called Christians in Antioch, and by courtesy, at least,

we are called by the same name to-day. Perhaps a careful study of the gospels, or more especially the Acts of the Apostles, will assist us in judging whether we deserve the name at all. Is our partial failure only because we are so pressed with need, or routine, or lethargy, or all of these? If we could only awaken I believe many of us would find that we do honour and love Him. Some of us would know that we would rather die, as many of our forefathers have done, than lose our hope in our Saviour, or willingly grow lax in our fealty to Him. Oh! I do believe that many of us, perhaps nearly all of us, do love the memory of the Christ-child, the Beloved of the Father. We do believe that in some splendid way He died for us and rose again that He might sit on the right hand of His Father; and thus in time fulfil every iota of His mission, for which He came into the world, "to save his people from their sins." But it would be eternal Christmas in the soul really to awaken to the fulness of the Christian faith.

"Let our lives breathe the song that is borne on the air,
Let us take the good news of His love everywhere,
Cheer the sad and oppressed, reach a kind helping hand;
Go ye forth at the King's command.

"Let the world learn the song ringing far on the air,
Let it waken sweet hopes that shall banish despair,
Let it hush every strife, let it end every war,
Jesus reigns and for evermore."

E. E. Hewitt.

CHAPTER III

"SHALL HE DO ALSO"

"I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." JOHN xiv. 12–13.

"And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." MARK xvi. 17–18.

"And, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which said he, ye heard from me: for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence. . . . But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." ACTS i. 4–8.

"And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. . . . And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the Apostles. And all that believed

were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved." Acts ii. 1–4, 43–47.

WE have been quoting, as briefly as we may, a few passages which serve well enough to throw a little light on the measure of spiritual power possessed, not only by the first Apostles, but also by the first disciples. We find that they taught the Christhood of Jesus of Nazareth and also obeyed the instructions and commands which He gave to them. They believed the promises which He made to them, and so obtained the powers promised. This unique company, the ridiculing, jest-loving people of Antioch, called, in derision, Christians, or followers of this new religious leader, who was said to be the Christ, the Great One, who had long been expected by the Jews. Were this jest-loving people still in existence, we think that they would have yet greater reason for their ridiculing mirth. What an irony the name Christian has become in its popular acceptance! If one were to ask a nominal Christian, as Paul questioned some men at Ephesus, "Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?" I feel assured that he would receive much the same answer, "Nay, we did not so much as hear whether there is a Holy Ghost." Afterwards the Ephe-

sians received this gift. Afterwards shall we, think you? Our efforts will be small and poor until thus endowed with strength from on high. This we must obtain. Christ promised this endowment to His disciples, bidding them wait for it. He said, "I send forth the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." To apply this to our day, we should take it as an instruction for us to remain within the organized Christian Church, and fit ourselves to receive this power to work. After we have received this gift we shall have direct guidance in our efforts. We have no intimation that Christ gave up the popular temple service, though it had become an almost empty shell. But the limitations of its incrusted institutions did not limit Him, He was greater than they. So should we be, and shall be presently, I hope. These disciples spoke with new tongues, and to each people in the language that they could best understand. If this phenomenal gift were to descend upon us now, as a Church, it would doubtless bestow a variety of gifts. Paul tells us

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit to profit withal. For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom; and to another the word

of knowledge, to another faith, and to another gifts of healings, and to another workings of miracles; and to another prophecy; and to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another interpretations of tongues; but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will."

We should be able to draw from this, and from what is contained in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that we are to have these many gifts bestowed upon us as a Church, *in the last days*. We are still in the last days, who would deny it? We must not, however, fall into the error of thinking that no one to-day is a recipient of spiritual gifts. All of us could with little effort recall to mind the strange rise to beneficent influence of many persons all along the centuries, since these words were written. And shall we say that no one is so endowed to-day? We fall into the impudent error too readily to-day, of crediting men with having great powers above other men, forgetting that great endowments are always Spirit born. It is one of the satanic handicaps to our usefulness. We feel that we are weak and unfit for some office which we do so desire to perform, so we sit down and refuse to try. If we truly feel called to some form of usefulness, why do we not drop this handicap, and ask for the gift of the Spirit, to give us the required wisdom, strength, and—most of all—courage, to perform it? This matter

of our attitude towards the Spirit of God is serious, it is of the very gravest moment. We are warned not to quench the Spirit. Christ was at His extreme of severity with those who blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira were stricken with death for attempting to deceive the Holy Spirit. There is in the Apostolic teaching, the most emphasised and frequent teaching regarding the office of the Holy Spirit. I am not sure that I understand why we ignore the presence and refuse the gifts of this so desirable Guest. Are we willing to receive Him? Paul tells us

"So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are Sons of God. And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

And the last call from our Redeemer from out His hidden throne to us was, "And the Spirit and the bride say come." Jesus Christ is our kindly Elder Brother, our King; and the Holy Spirit is our motherly source of guidance and wisdom and

courageous strength, but under the direction of our King, Jesus Christ. These are the Father's loving and wise gifts to us, that we may be able to be useful to our fellows in this life, at least, and that we may eventually become deathless Sons of God. And we do not seem to desire these illustrious Guests, nor their blessed gifts!

We find that after the disciples received the gift of the Spirit, they became a different sort of factor in the State. We find that they could, and did, do many wonderful things. We find that all that believed were together, and had all things common, and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all according as any man had need. We are told that they had favour with all the people. Is this the same as modern Communism? I think not quite. It certainly contains all that is good in modern Communism, but it did not abolish the family, or religion, or nationality. Property was not abolished, but held for the common good. The system was a signal success, but after some three hundred years of its workings, we find that its success had bred arrogant desire for greater influence. The Sower of Tares had been busy, and the field was becoming attractive and worldly. The wily Emperor of Rome was getting jealous of the united strength, and beneficent influence, of this numerous people. He, pretending to affiliate with them, really absorbed them. Thus began the historic Church of Rome. If we read carefully,

and without bias either way, the history of the result of this union, we shall not be left in much doubt as to whether the power of the Spirit accompanied it or not. As we have before noted, many, all down the centuries, have given evidence of possessing a measure of this power; but the Church as a popular organization certainly lost it. We should be loth to ascribe to Christ or the Holy Spirit the inhuman atrocities that have been abundantly recorded of her. Those whom we think of as being Spirit-endowed, have always been those who were striving to bring the idolatrous organization back to her primitive purity. The little leaven was left in the flour, which was to leaven the whole lump later on.

We shall not follow the history of the fallen Church, or stop to take note of the various men and movements that have from time to time been the means of remedying some, nay many, of the evils of the Church which was not a Christlike institution, but a conglomerate mass of beliefs and usages. What we do wish to do is to ascertain just where we, as professed Christians, at present stand in comparison and relation with this early and successful Church of the first century. We find it to be right conduct to remain in the popular, and very much rectified Church of Christ (in its many forms) until we be endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then we should be able to present the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus to each soul in such a manner as is

best suited to his capacity, and perhaps prejudice. Then to follow the spirit of the teaching we should give to each soul the same opportunity to live and develop itself that our best citizens now enjoy. Then, each man would know the Truth and no one would need to teach his brother: but we cannot see that it would do away with the public service of offering united praise and prayer to the Most High. Far from it. There would then be fulness of life physically, intellectually, and most of all, spiritually. No man would sadly complain "I hunger" for want of either class of satisfying food.

With joy we note the significant and tense struggle which is now taking place between the friends and foes of this uplifting movement. This is the one political and doctrinal point on which we shall judge ourselves as to whether we be Christians or not. The Jews expected a Saviour who should bring them great national splendour. Christ came teaching purity in the individual, as the unit of the State. The Jews, perhaps confusing the prophecies concerning His first and final appearance, were disappointed, and jealous for their ritualistic State Church. So they crucified Him. They did not want Him. Are we to-day entirely innocent of this crucifixion? If we, without flourishing of trumpets, could have all wrongs righted at once, do we honestly want it? At the last analysis it certainly comes to this, that if we

are indifferently and passively acquiescing in the degeneracy, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, of our race, we are tacitly assisting at the fresh crucifixion of our Lord. We may be assured that we are adding to His long term of "Bearing our sorrows." Do we want these Godlike endowments that we are heirs to? Do we want seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord? Aye, I ask, do we want this Man to rule over us? Do we want Jesus the Christ whom the heavens must hold until the times of restoration of all things? Do we want this restoration? Do we want the Spirit from on High? Paul was moved to exhort the Church of his day, that Christ had indeed come. He most carefully argues it throughout, and closes with these words of warning which we might do well to heed to-day. "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, if one declare it unto you."

If we are called Christians, it does not signify that we wear Christian clothing or build Christian houses, or eat Christian food, or use Christian coins, or that we are physically different to non-Christian persons. But whether we be worthy to bear this significant name or not does depend wholly on whether we follow the teachings, and obey the commands, of the Originator of our Faith. Nothing else bears on the subject in the slightest.

The demons knew, and believed, that Jesus was the Christ. We may share this sort of belief, and yet, like them, be quite unworthy to bear His name. To be a Christian indeed, is to see to it that the more unfortunate brothers and sisters of Christ are not so cruelly situated. The dirtiest, coldest, most hungry and degenerate little brother or sister of Christ is very dear to Him. We who are more fortunate must see to it that these are as comfortable as we are, that they are fed, clothed, and in sanitary homes; that their minds and spirits shall have the same opportunity of development that we more fortunate ones now enjoy. We cannot hope for the restoration of mental and spiritual degeneracy, before the body is reinforced by proper treatment. Also we cannot hope to impress such with our good influence, until we ourselves become more Christlike. It is useless to offer The Faith to them, or indeed to any one, without the force of the Christian life accompanying it. To-day, we cannot astonish the suffering or unbelieving ones into belief, by saying, Arise, take up thy bed, and walk. Alas, we have not these gifts, and what is sadder, we do not seem to want or expect them. Can we ask for an overwhelming Pentecost while we have columns about starvation, and the "idle rich," in our journals? Allow me to quote from a short article, in a popular daily paper, which appeared during the week previous to the taking of the census:

"During the week the police will be provided with special forms for the task of enumerating the homeless. The instructions to each constable are to enter particulars of every person within the limits of his night beat who passes the night of Sunday, April 2 [1911], in a barn, shed, kiln, etc., under a railway arch or on stairs accessible to the public, or wandering without a shelter."

May God in His mercy pity a Christian people that can passively allow this misery to exist! If we were to ask in His name that the Spirit might descend upon us, I much fear we should in reply hear the condemning answer issuing from the Throne, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. I never knew you." The gift of the Spirit is not for the selfishly indulgent, but for those only who are endeavouring to do the will of the Father.

Still, we must hope for this gift. We do already see much radical improvement in our attitude towards those less fortunate than ourselves. Believe me, if not me, do believe the Master's teaching, that this is not a question of doctrinal prejudice, or party politics, or individual opinion, but it is an individual judgment which is now taking place between a man and his Maker. In this judgment we are separated one from another. We throw our efforts in the balance, either for, or against, the new Kingdom of the Living Christ. We are either actively helping in the redemptive

work, or we are either actively or passively helping the destroyer of men's souls. The Spirit will assist us in our weakness, but never in our sinning. We know that we cannot, at once, serve God and the Selfish Principle. It is inevitable that we work for one, or the other; since we are made by our Creator, responsible beings.

We may, at times, wonder why we were launched into this life, so faulty, so weak, so seemingly inadequate, for the situation accompanying our probationary earth life. We ask why, oh why, did not the All-Pitiful make us better, wiser children? Why are my poor efforts of importance to the All-Powerful? Why should I ask or need gifts of power when God is All-Sufficient? Sometimes we have a feeling of rebellion, not unmixed with arrogant fault-finding towards our Creator, in this line. I think in this case we may safely conclude that our vision is too limited. We children of the kindergarten are so shortsighted, so uncultured in scientific soul growth, that we can only conceive such a very small portion of the complete plans and creations of the Infinite. We see only a broken patch of the (I am sure) wondrously beautiful whole. In one way, perhaps our efforts towards the harmonious workings of the whole may be, and are, weak and small, quite inadequate for much result; but, when we try to measure our own individual importance in God's plan, we must fail. Finite cannot measure

infinite. A tiny part may not lawfully be taken as a perfect revelation of the whole. So, when we feel rebellious and fault-finding with the workings of God's creations, we do but show forth our arrogant ignorance. Arrogance is always—shall we say—the impure vapour arising from ignorance. Musicians know that there are discords in music which help to produce most dramatically fine effects on the completed whole. They also know that some of the most sadly melodious effects are produced by the minor strains. But, these crashes of discord and wails of unworded sorrow are but echoes of the grand harmony of the greatest of all themes, the song of human life, the song of a human soul. Out of the discordant crashing and heavily chorded passages of my life, will, I know, come victory, sometime, somewhere, somehow. Out of the minor wails and sorrowful cadences of my sin-sick soul, will come peace, at the end of the day, perhaps much sooner than I think. Tennyson tells us, quoting another poet, that "A sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things." Is it not just as true, and quite as poetical in idea, to say that happier days are crowned, by remembering sorrows flown? How shall we measure our after-joy if we have had no sorrow? If we have had no discordant passages, how shall we value that "Peace of God which passeth all understanding"? It is for us to attain to this so desirable peace of soul. Let us pray to

be saved from the ignoble fault of petty criticism of God's plans.

If one having heard of Westminster Abbey were to conclude that he would like to see it for himself, he would of course journey thither. For our purpose we may suppose this person to be one of a not infrequent type, a man of narrow vision and petty prejudice. This man comes, gives to the Abbey a hurried sketchy glance, and soon catches sight of the ugly and grotesque gargoyles over the entrance. On these he turns his magnifying glass—also his wrath. He is filled with disgust and disappointment. He has seen enough. He turns his back on it and refuses to enter this grand old historic pile, this sacred place where our loved heroes lie in state. He goes away in rebellious anger with little more than the grotesque gargoyles in his eye. Perhaps it is as well so, for what has so petty a spirit in common with those grand souls, whose bodies are lying within the Abbey walls? He would probably classify and valuate the marble, and complain about the decaying state of the stone. But no thrill of emotion would force the tears to flow from out his stony, critical eye. Another person may be determined to view some notable, splendidly wrought picture of great beauty and meaning. He too brings his magnifying glass, and on entering the room immediately focuses it on some small part of this priceless treasure. He thus runs his eye over the picture bit by bit, he does it very

conscientiously and carefully. Then he too walks away in disgusted disappointment. He does not so much as turn his head as he leaves the room. Oh, if he had only got a real glimpse of the whole, as a united idealistic scheme, how quickly he would have changed his attitude—that is if he were capable of appreciating its meaning and beauty! A small patch of paint magnified is ugly enough. We see Art with such perception as we are able to take to it. Are these illustrations far-fetched? Perhaps. Still, persons have been known to see at once too much and yet not at all. We have heard of and known persons who have looked at human history as did our friends who visited the Abbey. We have heard of and known persons who critically magnify each small patch of God's plans, and so with a distorted vision, and unproportionate balance of perception, presume to pronounce judgment on the mind of the Infinite. We bring to the theme of man's human and external existence, our measure of perception. Those who see most, we call seers, or prophets. The petty-minded ones of us set our critical wrath on a few chance points, and thus tangle up our souls in the intricacies of a doctrinal maze.

We may not all be seers, but we must all be doers. We cannot all, or indeed any of us, appreciate God's infinite plan for His universe; we cannot hope to, even though we may be trying earnestly to take the larger view. We cannot hope

to understand the soul-life of even our earth-born heroes, though we may try to enter into the spirit of their greatness. We can, all of us, do only the small duties that present themselves to us in our daily walk. These we must do well, and with our greatest skill, for we do not know how important a small act may become as a part of the whole. This most careful attention to the perfection of the work in our seemingly trivial offices, is our absolute and present duty. If, by His will, we are bid do more far-reaching labour, we must do that in the same simple, childlike spirit of endeavour to please the perfect Father. We must be "Faithful over a few things." We must hope and wait for the further endowment of vision from the Spirit of Truth, our Teacher. The beauty of Art is dependent on its design and accurately wrought-out detail. In choral or orchestral music, how obviously dependent is the rendering of the whole on the precise execution of the parts! What care on the part of the conductor is required to ensure the harmonious working of the whole! The solidity of the rock is dependent upon the solidity of its atom. The excellence of the diamond is dependent on the excellence of its atom. We value our coal highly. If it is thickly mixed with matter other than coal it is almost useless. Have not these minerals at some, perhaps remote, time been subjected to cataclysm of some sort? Have they not suffered from cleansing fires and awful pres-

sures, before reaching their present state of usefulness or beauty? I feel certain that at some time our souls, each one, must needs pass through awful fires of cleansing, awful overwhelming pressure, at least some cataclysm, before we shall shine as the brightness of the firmament. We shall be wise then; alas, now we are not wise, only in so pitifully small a degree. As the rock is infinitely more beautiful in its more crystallized state as marble, and as coal is so much more beautiful in its more crystallized state as a diamond; so shall we be infinitely more lustrous souls after having passed through some fires and heavy pressure that shall befall us. Some time my soul and your soul shall pray, each alone, in the shadowings of Gethsemane. Afterwards we shall shine like the stars. But now we must be content if we be but dependable useful rock, and make of our lives as fitting a temple of the Holy Spirit as we are able to. We must see to it that if we be but common household coal we must burn brightly and keep the holy fires of spiritual life ever clearly flaming. It is for our Creator to decide when we shall become more like the pure and glistening marble or the peerless diamond. But let us at least be useful rock or coal, every atom good, "and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is

pure." The main point is that *we must become pure by some means.* We know that "as the gold must be tried by fire, so the heart must be tried by pain." All nature points to the crucible. So taking all classes of teaching together we would infer that all our earth difficulties are but cleansing fires for the renewing of our souls to a higher estate. What "strange adventures" we shall meet in other spheres than this we know not; but in all sanity of spirit let us see to it that we are fitting these bodies, His temples, for higher class service, at least, in this life. Let us learn to look on difficulties as steps heavenwards; and ceasing to repine that we are not now perfect, let us go on from perfection to perfection.

I am not impudently trying to find an excuse for a cruel Creator. I am but endeavouring to take away a sort of hidden bitterness towards our dear Father, which I have at times stumbled against in the hearts of my fellow human beings, in the presence of suffering, want, and despair. My own heart has not always been free from this short-sighted folly. One may learn to respect the Divine Will rather than his own if he form a habit of looking back at times over his own life. In so doing how often we should cry, "I am so glad that God withheld the thing that I so strongly desired. What a disaster it would have been to me!" Or, at another time He may have seen fit to crush us almost—but not quite—to death. We have per-

haps stood still, prayerless, half-paralyzed until the weight of the storm lifted. Perhaps, in the afterward that followed, lay for us a joy which we would have endured much more to be possessed of, had we been able to foresee it. I believe with all my heart and soul and strength, that "To them that love God all things work together for good." I can see the shadow of only one real disaster to my soul, that is that some time the tempter may subtly continue to intrude so many gaudy objects between my soul and my vision of God, that I may forget Him and cease to love Him.

"Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

This is the one calamity which can overtake me, come else what will.

If we are to be joint heirs with Christ, we must share with Him Gethsemane and the Cross. This is natural Law. We may with reason conclude that the beautiful flower is under the most trying of circumstances for its small self, just before it bursts its silken bands, and comes forth a perfect bloom. *No one of us suffers all things.* We must each of us sooner or later take our share, if we are to become perfected by the things which we suffer. Afterwards we shall be glad. And so we would take it to be our duty—and privilege—cheerfully and hopefully—to endure our trials, knowing that they

last but for a short while, and are but ascending steps. We should learn in any difficulty or pain, physical, mental, or spiritual, of our own, to feel for the infirmities of our fellows. "A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind" has been aptly said. Wondrous kind! If we were each wondrous kind to each other, how near would be the Kingdom of Heaven! No fear then that we should ask in vain for the assistance of the Spirit. With this *wondrous kindness* would follow *wondrous works*.

Our ability for redemptive work would be limited only by our measure of belief, or unbelief. "I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." We think ourselves Christians, we think we are capable of good works, we think we believe. Is there much evidence to substantiate these claims? We may judge of our faith by its limits of capacity for redemptive good works. This only is the Master's trial-ground for the good seed. *If ye believe ye can do also.* If ye cannot do, ye do not believe, is the corresponding conclusion. I can find no other testing distinction between Christians and non-Christians, excepting this obedient capacity to do the redemptive work of Christ on earth *under His guidance.*

And we were to remain in the visible Church of

God until we have received powers. We find that the Church is to be cleansed, not destroyed. Peter and John called upon the Church of their day to repent and learn of the Christ Whom they had crucified, so that there might be times of refreshing. What a wonderful record is contained in the account of the Acts of the Apostles. These Apostles and disciples had believed and had attained. Do we thus believe, and shall we thus attain? Shall we? Verily many of us do see visions, and dream dreams; but can we do greater works than these which our Lord did during His short earth-life? Still, Himself said that we should do greater—if we believe. Have we yet done greater? There seems to be left in bold relief, a doubt about the sincerity of our profession of faith. Still, we must each examine his own heart; we cannot judge each other. More than probably we believe in small part and do small works. We had better pray with the father of the demon-stricken child, "I believe, help thou mine unbelief." Then perhaps we may—nay, we shall—attain to greater works in the redemptive scheme of our Lord Christ amongst the children of the race. The preparatory work there is to do for His reign, seems unmeasured in its vastness, and in its minutia; so unmeasured must be our endowments, if we are to fill the true position of those who believe. If we truly believe, we shall love to walk by His side, until we become endowed with the power

to do the works that it is His will we should do, be they great or small.

"All works are good, and each is best
As most it pleases Thee;
Each worker pleases when the rest
He serves in charity:

"And neither man nor work unblest
Wilt thou permit to be.
Lord, I would serve and be a son;
Dismiss me not, I pray."

T. T. Lynch.

CHAPTER IV

"BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW"

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." JOHN xiii. 35.

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. . . . But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing." JAMES i. 22–25.

OUR text as quoted from our Lord must stand as leading tenet of our now too complicated Christian belief. The sturdy-souled James followed close in the wake of the Master, in his teaching. If Paul taught most strongly justification by faith, he also taught that the hearing must be accompanied by doing, thus, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Paul tells us of his striving after the continued life. He says, "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air; but I buffet (or bruise) my body, and bring it into bondage; lest by any means after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected." I fail to find that even Paul, who was certainly the apostle of justification by

faith, hopes for this salvation without the Christ-like life and *work* as complement. He taught the doctrine of Christian liberty, but never did he teach licence to sin, or to be unclean, or unkind. Paul taught that to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ would bring us eternal life. But, we must also draw from his direct teaching that he feared that himself might be rejected as being unfit, unless he should succeed in subduing the selfish, carnal instinct that so constantly warred with his spiritual hopes. I can find no Messianic utterance, or Apostolic exhortation that gives us, as Christians (by faith), licence to countenance in our hearts and lives, injustice and cruelty one towards another. And yet these human attributes do certainly dominate over the holier ones of neighbourly justice and brotherly kindness. Who can deny it? That some of us are endeavouring to leave our Cain-like instinct behind, and are developing more of the sweet brotherly instinct of Jesus Christ, is certain. Herein lies our work for the souls of the race. The efficacy of our service will in time rescind the penalty resulting from our fall. We shall not be a fallen race, but a risen one; risen from Adam to Christ. I do not mean to claim that social reform, of however laudable a character, should supplant that which we call religion, far from it. But I do urge that that which we term religion should take as its only *active function*, social reform in its many and exceedingly

varied phases. We all agree, I think, that social reform covers the ground of the attaining to human perfection, not only of those of the Faith, to whom I am now appealing, but also of all individuals of our empire. Not only of our vast empire, but of all the world. Jesus Himself said, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Therefore the missionary work is the highest phase of social reform service, if it be pure Gospel teaching that is thus carried into benighted lands, or into the downtrodden sections of our own people. All teaching for the Kingdom must keep close to the Master's few essentials in doctrine; and all conduct must keep close to His example and command of brotherliness. To allow non-essential doctrinal points any prominence in missionary or social work, is already recognized to be injurious folly. To reach the status of the ethics of Christ's kingdom, as recorded, is out of the question as an *immediate* result, but it is the *ultimate* ideal to which we must, and shall, attain. To this attaining we must set ourselves, if we wish to be known as disciples of the Lord Christ. In all things we shall seek for righteousness to cover, first, our own individual lives, next our national life, and lastly, the whole earth. "For

it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God." "For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living." It is difficult for a well-balanced mind to conceive of any one being a disciple of Christ, a Christian, if he be not found working in the service of Christ, in bringing about the redemption, temporal and spiritual, of his brother. "Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself. . . . Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well; the demons also believe, and shudder." We must each be a missionary to the race. Our field is that vast world area which lies between the abodes of the homeless, and glorified man in the realization of a magnified Garden of Eden: between the despairing agony of lost souls, and the holy joy in the hearts of the sons of God, the joint heirs with Christ.

If we set ourselves seriously to think upon matters eternal, as many of us do, we shall find that we must hark back no short way before we may find a starting place. We must shake ourselves free from much that is habit-formed, and has little meaning to us now, a sort of mental

incrustation, which holds us habit-bound. From this we must escape, if we wish to take part in matters eternal. There are some things which do appeal to our conception as verities. This is all on which we have to build. We can conceive a little of our own planet, our own racial manner of living, our own racial varied ideas and beliefs concerning the Creator. The views of each people are a little different, even each personal view is different. We conceive the bright points of light in the heavens to be stars, and presume them to be relative to our own planet, and judge that they may be peopled with personalities somewhat like ourselves. But we do not know. All seems to be moving in rhythmic order. Our conception of this magnificent panorama depends on the capacity of our imagination, amplified by available knowledge. The human perception is thus limited by its available knowledge, and by its capacity for making analogous deductions by the aid of the trained imagination. He who uses these gifts with the best results is he whom we term as being *wise*. I think this is mainly true, after making allowance for minor qualifications and limitations. Much is utterly unknowable to the wisest of us—at least in our present state of being. Many things we have a perception of, which is approximately knowledge. We find the wisest of men speak with the greatest of caution. They frequently say, "It would seem from certain data

likely to be so-and-so." They find forces working in some particular manner in this place, and presume that given the same conditions elsewhere the results would be the same. But, by experience, they also know that there are other minor, or perhaps unrecognisable, laws which may cause deviation. Greatness of capacity in drawing accurate conclusions is limited by at least three lines of thought. First by the measure of ability to see into the infinite minutiæ of nature; second, by the measure of ability to perceive the immensities of the universe; and thirdly, by the measure of ability in placing the common objects and events of life, as we know it, in their true relation to the whole, and in their true proportional position and valuation. There is, I take it, no more important exercise of the human intellect than this last. The lack of this last-named faculty accounts for much of our fault-finding with the schemes of God. We, not possessing a large degree of this balancing faculty, perceive affairs as incongruous, chaotic, and quite irreconcilable with the wisdom of God. We must pray earnestly for wider vision. We must bring to bear on this issue all the imagination of the seer, the powers of analysis and synthesis of the philosopher, praying earnestly for the aid of the Spirit of Truth. Our soul's peace depends on our vision of God in his dealings with men. We can endure better when we trust fully. "Behold, we call them blessed that endured: ye have heard

of the endurance (or patience) of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, how that the Lord is full of pity, and merciful." There is reason in courage. There is shortsighted foolishness in cowardly shirking of duty. Our duty to our Father is worked out by us through service for one another and under the command of the Risen Christ, and by the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

We may have dreamed, many of us, in our most imaginative moods, of other worlds than ours, and peopled like ours; worlds in which the All Thought has designed other plans than those which obtain in our race for the continued life of men's souls. I rather think that perhaps ours is unique, as we are told that the plans by which we were to be brought into the renewed life were things that the angels desired to look into. We think that perhaps our racial history is a sadder one than usual, but if this is so, we shall without doubt have joy to compensate, if we endure.

"Chance and change are busy ever;
Man decays and ages move;
But His mercy waneth never;
God is wisdom, God is love.

"E'en the hour that darkest seemeth
Will His changeless goodness prove;
From the gloom His brightness streameth;
God is wisdom, God is love."

J. Bowring.

Wisdom and love may bring us inconceivable joy in a little later day. We must never allow this

earth-life period to be magnified out of all proportion to eternity. I think that this weakness is also the secret of our failure in discipleship. Also we underestimate our small present duties to the degradation of the future of our race.

We find ourselves each to be one of this race of creatures called Man. I do not see that it is of first importance to know whether or not our far-back forebears were climbing and leaping through branches of forest trees, up out of danger from huger non-climbing animals; or whether my oft-times dream of falling through space comes from an active hereditary thought-cell (a sort of atavism), which has been transmitted and many times retransmitted down from my far-back heavily laden foremother, who may have fallen through the higher branches to the lower in some sudden terror. This would not affect our position at the present moment, would it? If at some given time in our history we became conscious that there was an Influence outside of ourselves, with which we came constantly in contact, but which was never visible to us; some Power which seemed to control our actions, and to which we instinctively turned for succour; would not this be our soul's first dawning of knowledge of God as Over-soul? If in course of time we came to feel that when other beings, who were the same as ourselves, did rough and cruel things to us, we felt pain; and, if in time we saw that when we did rough and cruel

things to these others, like ourselves, that they too seemed to suffer pain: if then we began to fear that invisible Influence, and felt like hiding our faces from Him, would not that be the beginning of the knowing of Good from Evil? Was it not the dawning of Conscience? If in time we came to find that there was also an invisible power and influence, outside of ourselves, which seemed ever urging us on to be rough and cruel to other beings, in order that we might enjoy a greater share of some food or comfort ourselves; and that we could do it with more or less safety from retributive punishment from the benign Influence; was not this our first consciousness of Self-will? When we began to listen to the selfish influence, and try to deafen our instinct to the kindly pitiful Influence, was not this the time of our "Fall"? If these events have come about in this most natural way, the wonder of our being loses nothing of its marvellousness or dignity. Whether we came by this circuitous route, or by instantaneous and miraculous creation, it matters little. I believe scientists admit that the Scriptural story could be so construed by being amplified. If we cannot yet understand the account of the creation of woman, as it is given in the poetic story of Eden, so are there many other things that we do not understand or comprehend in animal creation and reproduction. Perhaps we have been told only part of this Creation story. But, what is really of vital

concern to us, is that we find ourselves here, men and women; and according to the known history of our race, our instincts have made little progress since our primeval days. Have we gained much in unselfishness? We still deliberately give cruel pain to one another, hoping that we may escape retributive punishment for our ill conduct. Look around amongst the human race and consider to what an almost universal extent this is still continuing. I think some naturalists claim, that so-called ferocious beasts of the jungle are comparatively harmless when well fed and comfortable. Are we so? Is this yet the status of modern man? Domestic swine have this selfish instinct large, I think quite as over-developed as we have it. I have in early life observed that the largest one of a young family of swine used always to eat all that it could and would then climb into the feeding trough and stand, in order to prevent the others from feeding. The others usually got enough in spite of the greedy fat one, excepting, to my childish sorrow, one little one, which never could get enough food. He was always a lovable little fellow too, and thrived finely when taken away from the others. I have beaten that largest swine in childish rage, but he only grunted disapproval at my impotent strokes—and remained standing in the trough. I fear that we have travelled far away from reasonable wild life, and have adopted too much of the propensities of the domestic

animals which have caused me so much childish rage. Some one may remark that "Comparisons are odious." Well, I think perhaps they are. There is also another searching little proverb which says, "If one tosseth salt on thee thou wilt receive no hurt—unless thou hast sores." I experience a smarting sensation myself whilst I make the above comparison, so I confess that I shall be obliged to buffet myself, or expect to be buffeted, for I have a few small possessions that I could give to a needy brother, but fail to do so ofttimes. And so we ask, have we gained by our long racial experience, or have we only become more *knowing*, and may we say, *crafty?*

Do not many of us feel that we, as a whole, are on the wrong line of ambition, are pursuing phantoms, are setting up false standards and ideals, are laying up treasures in the wrong store-house? And so we repeat that as the Founder of our Faith gave us as the only test of fitness for eternal life that we dealt with true brotherly kindness one towards another, and declared that our treatment of our fellows was really a treatment of Himself, I do not see how it can savour of secularism to urge that we are not, as a majority, a Christian people; while we have hunger and misery in our midst, when there is great plenty for all, if it were a little more evenly distributed. Alas for our selfish propensity of *standing in the feeding trough!* Alas, that some of us never in our lives had enough

to eat, and that some of us have no shelter from the ever-falling chilling rains! Alas, that some of us have so much wealth that it has palsied our brotherly instinct, the instinct by which our souls shall live, or for the lack of which they shall die! Alas, that those whose state lies between the always hungry and the always overfed should be so indifferent to the inequalities which exist in our social conditions. How joyfully we observe many radically helpful movements in process! If only the electorate of this empire could be brought to realize that *there can be no party politics in a patriot's soul*, what a blessing it would be! A patriot's *party* will invariably be the party that is endeavouring earnestly to help to redeem the people from all misery and sinning. To the true patriot there will always be two lines of political trend. The one redemptive, therefore Christlike; and the other destructive, therefore satanic. There can be no middle course. There can be no irresponsibility in an electorate. On the electorate (under Christ) rest the vital issues of this crucial day. Never, perhaps, has the farewell address of Joshua been more acutely suitable than it is to-day, in this our nominally Christian State.

"And if it seems evil unto you to serve Jehovah, choose you this day whom ye will serve. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve Jehovah. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jehovah,

to serve Him, and they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore put away, said he, the foreign gods which are among you, and incline your hearts unto Jehovah, the God of Israel. And the people said unto Joshua, Jehovah our God we will serve, and unto His voice will we hearken."

Joshua went to his rest, and in time came the Great One, who should lead Israel into her Spiritual Canaan. Perhaps He had a better message for them. No, it was the same ancient message, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other or else he will hold to one, and despise the other; Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Christ's teaching astonished this people of divided hearts, and disturbed them not a little. A few years later He spoke from out His invisible (to us) throne thus, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." Then follows an account of the blessing bestowed on those who are clean-souled, who have clean robes. We find that these only have a right to the tree of life, and the City of God. The list of those who shall be excluded, if it is carefully analysed, will be found to undermine many systems which are now, in our partial blindness, held almost sacred. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another." This is the testing text for a human soul, the test by which he lives or dies. By it shall we testify to

ourselves and a watching world, whether we be genuine or only of a spurious sort. If we quietly meditate on the above named list of excluding sins, in their minutest and usually tortuous, half-hidden working, we shall be sure to find ourselves guilty of much that is accounted as criminal, and worthy only of death, in the Holy City. We shall be in grave doubt regarding our discipleship. We are choosing this day whom we will serve. Our views may differ, but our aims must be the uplifting of the race, and it is by this test that men shall know whether we bear the "Hall Mark" of Christ, or not. Spiritual economy and Political Economy are inseparably wedded, as typified by our existing Church and State. If you will find me a State in which its people serve as a Church of consecrated holy men and women, whose greatest honour is to do greatest service to all, men and women who really believe in our Lord, and are in agony of earnestness to bring about His complete reign, cost what it may of temporary loss; if you show me this Church, in that State also will I show you a Political Economy that is nearing, and arriving ever nearer, the status of the teaching and commands of the Saviour of the people from their sins. The two cannot for long live apart.

By this shall all men know. Heretofore we have been universally described as Roman Catholic, Greek, Protestant. Amongst ourselves we are spoken of as Roman Catholic, English Church (or

Anglican), Nonconformists, etc. Then there is the High, Low, and Broad Church. There are Congregational, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and all the minor subdivisions. We need have no quarrel with the minor dividing doctrines, so long as they are not considered as essentials. That is where the trouble lies. Our faith must be as the faith of a little child, or we cannot enter the holy place. Babes cannot take strong meat, and we are indeed weaker than babes, in our spiritual experience. If this were not true, our fruits would be better and more plentiful. God has veiled many of these subordinate doctrines, so thickly that we may be sure they are not to be accounted as essentials. Christ gave us the real essentials in no uncertain voice. This is our first necessary food. This is our initial and essential principle of life. If we put ourselves in training with the words of Christ only, until His idea of what we should be becomes dominant in our subconscious spirit, and therefore in our conduct, we shall emerge, many of us, I hope, as real disciples, many of us, I fear, as new converts. We shall not be described as Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, or Methodist, or by any other sectarian name, but we shall be said to be Christians indeed, in whom there is no guile. If we study the commands and advice, nay the beseechings, of our only Saviour, in connexion with the prophetic teaching which foretold His coming and His mission, I think that

we shall not come out of this study as one of that class of thinkers which are loosely termed Unitarians; a class which seems to be anything between almost Christian and almost Infidel. We shall know that Jesus of Nazareth was, and is now, an active, loving Saviour of men's souls from disease and death. His is the only way, first, by example and teaching, ultimately by personal, continuous, and absolute command over us; and also over the intelligences which minister to our needs, if we be members of His body. This must continue until we all become Sons of God. All great religions ultimately reach the conclusion that the way to eternal happiness is by the subjection of the selfish fleshly instinct. But few have assayed to reach the perfect height in these cults, only the few "Holy Men." It was left to the Redeemer of our race to be the climax of the whole religious trend. All that is good in all cults is in His authoritative teaching. It is natural that in time His régime should supersede all inferior and insufficient ones. If we each try to encourage the healthful and sane instincts that we shall find latent, or at least partly latent, within our souls, we shall find that all the teachings of Jesus appeal to our finest ideals, and noblest instincts. This in itself is proof enough that His way is the natural avenue by which we shall journey to Celestial Perfection. It is in keeping with the Infinite Perfection, that we be faithful over a few things, so that we may be

made ruler over many things. When we consider our Creator's infinite care over the almost inconceivable intricacy and accuracy of our *unit* of physical organism, the *cell*, we can the more readily perceive reason in Jesus' teaching that we be faithful over a few things. It is even God's Law of Life. We feel that we may say that we know this, when we observe, ever so dimly, His marvellous works of all sorts in nature. The followers of Jesus Christ were wrangling over the question of supremacy in the Kingdom of God, and appealed for final decision to the Master. He told them, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Spiritual supremacy results from excellent workmanship, and not from arrogant overbearing idleness. Little children are pleased to learn and do little things. Healthy-minded little children are proud to assist their parents or elders. They do not ask to do great things. The abnormal and selfish nature demands supremacy. It often succeeds in its demands, in human affairs; but it can in no wise succeed in spiritual matters. The Apostles were pinned down to this law of service, just as much as we are, just as much as the whole world is; just as Jesus the Christ was and is. His supremacy came to Him by right of His attaining it, not by ambitious overwhelming influence. It came by a humble, simple, godly life; by the things which He suffered; by the great and awful giving

up of Himself for us in order that He might bring us all to that life to which He had so quickly attained. That it was awful to Him in some way which perhaps we cannot yet conceive of, is evident by Gethsemane, by His prayer, and by His cry on the Cross. By His physical agony, by His appealing prayer, by His last cry, I believe that in some more than regal way His life was given an offering for me. My brave Redeemer could not shrink from death, though it were the cruel nails of the Cross. He did not fear to lead where He knew many of His faithful disciples must follow. No! it was not that. May we not be sure that the shadow of some infinitely greater, perhaps more cruel, cross, lay upon His prophetic soul, and thus so greatly appalled Him? May we not feel sure that it must have added to His agony, did He foresee in panorama, the historic Church, that was to succeed His handful of followers, in all its recorded and unrecorded cruelties amongst the children of men? Would not the desire to heal, together with the knowledge that He must not do so, break His tender, loving heart? Would not this alone wrench His very soul? Whatever it was that did disturb and appal Him so keenly, we know not, but we do know that finally He obediently gave up for our sakes. This I feel that I *do* know. This I *do* accept. I am sure that in some Kingly, Godlike way, He gave His life to justify many. We know that it is said:

"Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities."

He gave up utterly and for ever all selfish instinct—if any tempted Him—and offered His complete service to the Father. This service was to be the caring for the children of the race, and finally the accomplishing of their physical and spiritual redemption.

If we be His true disciples, this also will be our work. Prophecy is nearly in the last stages of its fulfilment. Thus we know that Christ's complete reign must soon be an accomplished fact. Already we see preparations taking place all around us in all sorts of ways and workings. Happy is the man or woman that is found in the service of the living, reigning, Christ, Who is to save the people—not from eternal torture, but from their loathsome sinning—as fit temples of the living God. A true and intelligent Christian of to-day will find on careful examination of the matter, that he must enter into the sacrificial spirit of the Saviour of the people. He must make himself acquainted with the real needs of the unfortunate children of the race. Where he cannot hasten the healing, he

must bow his will to the Higher Law. But work towards this end he must, or he is no Christian. If we can remove pain, want, sin, or ignorance, and we do not do so, we are to that degree the cause of it. If we do not save a life when we can, we slay that life. All ills allowed, are caused. This has always been natural law. This indifference to our remedial responsibility is Cain-like in its results. The blood of Abel is still crying from the ground. Cain, the slayer of his brother's body, mind, and soul, is still retorting impudently to God and man, "Am I my brother's keeper?" And the blood of the starving, degenerate, suffering millions throughout this vast empire is still crying from the ground. It is crying from the slums, hovels, and lairs of the homeless, from the physical, intellectual, and most of all, spiritual degeneracy of the *entire race.*

Have any of us ever seen our Messiah as He is? John tells us

"We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure. Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. And ye know that he was manifested to take away sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither knoweth him. My little children, let no man lead you astray; he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous: he that doeth sin

is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. To this end was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us."

We are loth to refrain from quoting much more of this sweetly pure epistle, but we do pray of every believer to read it so frequently and thoughtfully that it may become an incorporated part of the subconscious, intellectual quality of his mind, which controls his conscience, therefore his conduct. It is by this *obedient abiding* in the very heart and life of our Redeemer, that will lead us to this gentle forgiving love one towards another. As our text admonishes, it is by this that all men shall know whether we belong to Christ or Satan. There can be no middle course. The test is simple enough for a child to understand. As we are appealing mainly to those who believe, we must urge that it be plainly understood that the *"nominal Christians" of our race are they who are holding the battle-ground against the Redeemer of men.* Well may an unbeliever say in derision, "See how these Christians love one another." See the satanic bitterness which exists even yet internationally, notwithstanding much splendid

endeavour! See the unpatriotic and shameful bitterness of party feuds, in politics, and in religious matters, and in various schools of thought! See the daily records of our private and home life, as chronicled in current newspapers! See the conduct of friend with friend! It may well be said that we do not love better than others. This the sneering world can notice as well or better than we. *So, I contend that "Nominal Christianity" is responsible* for the stand that we take against the Kingdom of Christ. The state of our helpless, often degenerate, nearly always patient, poor; this stricken, illiterate, Christless, driftwood of our people, is a standing evidence against us. God is waiting; only a short time now, and redress will begin, aye, is already beginning. These shall not always cry in vain. Compensation and retributive law will begin its inexorable process. With joy we see the dawning of a new era, an era in which all souls shall be younger brothers of Christ, brothers to each other, on terms of an equality which has for its test or credentials the economics of the Kingdom. This is true citizenship, true nobility; and each of us may enter this heaven-born family now. Nay, it is our most pressing duty—and privilege—that we do enter it at once, as there is much work to be done. I wish our honoured friend who wrote *If Christ came to Chicago* and *Satan's Invisible World Displayed* would write, as companions to these, *If Christ came to London*,

and *Satan's Invisible World displayed in our own Empire.* Let some one unearth the workings of the Satanic kingdom in the most astonishing state of affairs in our marvellous world-metropolis, the City of London. The City of luxurious, indifferent, arrogant, carousal; and of miseries too pitiful and intricate in their workings to be related, too heartrending for us to retain our self-respect or happiness if we fully realize them. Little wonder that the Son of Man sweat great drops of blood in His agony of soul, during His prophetic vision. What a shame we have been, and now are, to Him!

It is a matter of deepest interest to each individual in our State, that the pain and crying of the weaker little ones be soothed; that the starving be nourished properly, in order that they may be fit for honourable service to the Empire; that they, and we all, may have opportunity of mental and spiritual culture, that the idle rich become industrious and generous, and ashamed before God and man of their abnormally selfish instinct. Along these various avenues there is work for all, from highest to lowest, from holiest to the most selfish. We must all be doers and not hearers only. By working under the guidance of, and in unison with, Christ's government, shall we live. All else is sinning. The soul that sinneth shall die. Christ gave instructions that were simple and easy to understand. He directed us to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law." It is

satanic and issues from Satan to add to each other's burdens. By this simple test are we examined by the world at large, by Christ, by the Spirit, by God Himself, and our own consciences.

"O Master, let me walk with Thee
In lowly paths of service free;
Tell me Thy secret; help me bear
The strain of toil, the fret of care.

"Teach me Thy patience; still with Thee
In closer, dearer company,
In work that keeps faith sweet and strong,
In trust that triumphs over wrong."

W. Gladden.

CHAPTER V

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

"And Jehovah said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? and he said, I know not; am I my brother's keeper?"

GENESIS iv. 9.

"I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick; but the fat and the strong will I destroy; I will feed them in justice." EZEKIEL xxxiv. 16.

"Many shall purify themselves, and make themselves white, and be refined; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand." DANIEL xii. 10.

"That through these ye may become partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust. Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge self-control; and in your self-control stedfastness (patience); and in your stedfastness godliness; and in your godliness brotherly kindness; and in your brotherly kindness love. For he that lacketh these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. 2 PETER i. 4–7, 9.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." REV. xvi. 15.

I FEAR that nearly all of us are shamefully lacking in the garments of the virtues, and of holy service in binding up the broken and strengthening

the weak. Why is it that we are so deplorably short of the true human ideal which we find underlying all Holy Scripture? Is it our deep-rooted and intentional wickedness? I altogether doubt it. Wicked we surely are, but not so diabolically wicked and cruel in intent as our methods of citizenship would indicate. Many of us would be delighted to be able to realize the condition described in the Sermon on the Mount. Then why do we not strive after it night and day in agony of tears and prayers? We really must be in a state of spiritual coma. And so we beseech those who have a *hope in Christ* to look most carefully into the conditions in which our fellow-beings and ourselves exist, in order that we may be more fully awake to our grave responsibility in helping to remove these cruel and insane systems by which we are handicapped, in this so great an event, the race for eternal life. Paul said, "I therefore so run, as not uncertainly; so fight I, as not beating the air." It were well that we examined each his own ability for this running with certainty; this fighting with sure effect. Even the most earnest of our workers seem in a sort of spiritual half-torpor. Athletes do not doze when trying to win the prize. Should we when trying to win "The prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"? It is not to be wondered that the seer Ezekiel saw a vision of dry bones. No wonder that he saw that they were *very dry*. His faith

in God's awakening and inspiring power was indeed strong when he called out to them: "O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live." And by this figure we may hope that though we be very dry and to all appearances dead, the breath of the Spirit of God shall bring us into renewed life, and that we shall yet stand on our feet each in his own place, each doing his own duty. Paul asked the Corinthians thus, "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" The Master had taught Paul this doctrine of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in those who should become Sons of God and heirs of the Kingdom with Jesus Christ. Either we are becoming Sons of God and have His Spirit within us, or we are not, and have not the Spirit of God within us. Have we evidence of the individual purity and power which accompanies this indwelling? We fear that at best it is only the faintest breath that thus inhabits us, as our fruits are so few and of such poor quality. By our fruits are we tested. We may with reason suspect that we are in a state of spiritual half-torpor from which we are, seemingly, unable to awaken ourselves, rather than that we deliberately choose to be cruel, selfish, and indifferent towards our brothers.

Sometimes at the beginning of the day we rise up from our beds with sluggish reluctance. We

cannot fully awaken ourselves. We remember with dismay that many duties await us. How do we proceed to recover our wonted activity? Do we sit or lie down until we recover our wonted energy? I think not. Do we not force ourselves to go through the usual routine of cleansing and dressing ourselves? and after partaking of strengthening and renewing food, we often find ourselves quite fit and ready for the day's duties. Is it not much the same in our spiritual life? We must see, if we be not too fast asleep, that the dawn of morning is here. We must, if our spiritual eyes are open, see so very many duties awaiting our faithful performance. We are dismayed at our seeming inability to exert ourselves, or properly to awaken our spiritual energies. Our half aroused intellects realize in some dim measure, that love to God, and service to man, are well nigh identical; but how we are to drag our sluggish spirits into these active soul heights is too much for us, in our seeming weakness.

If we are really sincere in our desires, we shall be much troubled in spirit at our continuous failure, for we shall fully realize that a citizen of the Holy City cannot be an idle sluggard. He cannot even be an ordinary citizen. After all, is an utterly idle person a living human being, or is he only a transient figure? He certainly is not an important entity in our midst, excepting as a parasitical encumbrance on our more industrious brethren, our

true citizens. So I take it that a non-worker in the Church of Christ, in the Holy City, is not merely a nonentity, but an impossibility.

What is true service? may well be asked. We must all see that the field is wide, wide enough for all men to find an opportunity to exercise and so develop their one or ten talents. But woe to the human soul that will not use his small talent, because he was not given a great one. And woe to the human soul who has ten talents, and is too indifferent, or lazy, to use the half of them for the betterment of his fellows. We may not with impunity shirk our individual duty—or it should be privilege—though we may wish to. We should remind ourselves that the City of God is to be established in the earth conditions. Therefore, no one at this far advanced period of earth history dare attempt to dissociate social reforms and spiritual matters. If he does do so, it is at the risk of his eternal life. Our latent talents are assets for which we shall have to account to our Judge at the testing time. It would be better for ourselves and for the world at large did we realize this truth.

Service must necessarily be very varied, and for this reason we may well suppose that our Creator gave us as a race all capabilities that are required; to every man according to his needs, to do the duty assigned to him. Nor does all work consist in feeding the hungry of body. There are many, alas,

hungry of soul, to be fed also. Perhaps some disease-stricken, suffering one may have unmeasured influence towards holiness amongst acquaintances, by cheerfulness, resignation, and hope in Christ, by the kindly spoken word of admonition to a wayward one, or the sympathetic word to another sufferer who may be in trouble or sorrow. Even the wealthy and socially important are sorely in need of friendly counsel, as theirs is the most hopeless social condition of all to-day amongst us. Hopeless, because they are blind to the enormity of their sinning, and indifferent to the disease with which they are as a class afflicted. God says, "The fat and strong will I destroy." Surely these who are wealthy and of great social importance are the *fat and strong*. They are a doomed class so long as they remain as they now are as a class. Surely they do not "understand," therefore they do not purify themselves, they refuse to be refined. Our text from Daniel tells us why. So we claim that there is a field for a far-reaching mission amongst the idle and indifferent wealthy families of our State. I hope yet to see many of these use their ten talents of, at least, wealth, in a kingly, Christlike manner. I feel sure that all will not remain in that unholy throng that shall flee before Nemesis. Some will doubtless "go away sorrowful," as did the young ruler of old, but surely so lovable ones as some of these are, shall come back and bring their offering and cast

it at the feet of the Redeemer of men. And our rulers; what of them? Rulers we must needs have until His Kingdom is accomplished, but let there be a mission amongst the rulers, from greatest to most insignificant, that they may be holy and just, and conscious that they are acting only for the best interests of the coming of the Holy City. This spirit we rejoice to see is growing amongst this, so truly important, company of our people. There is little question whether there is needed a mission amongst the commercially important of our people. This work is twofold. One line lies along the way of systems of commerce being cleansed from all injustice and dishonesty in the transaction of business one with another, and honesty with the purchasing public. The other lies along the line of the Cain-like and satanic injustices and dishonesties of the labour question, in connexion with the production and marketing of the products. The unearthing of these abuses, which we so often see attempted of late, is a sure indication that they too are now under judgment. May God in His mercy give these lovers of men who are making this attempt great skill, insight, wisdom, and courage, until all these atrocities are bared before an ashamed world. There are so many evils rampant among us, that we are forced to leave each story to be told by those who are so deeply interested in the exposure and removal of these various scandalous abuses. We quote an alarming and

comprehensive list of these from an account of a May meeting in London. It runs thus:—

"Drink Traffic.
Housing Problem.
Land Question.
Various Phases of Impurity.
White Slave Traffic.
Impure Literature.
Betting and Gambling.
Child Rescue and Training.
Sweating.
Pleasures and Recreations of the People.
Abolition of War."

In concluding an address on the above list the President said, "Surely the time has come for us to face the whole situation and study the whole problem in the light of the Incarnation, the Cross, and the ascended Christ, with hearts burning with the enthusiasm of humanity kindled at the altar of Calvary." This is how men feel when they get a glimpse of the state of affairs as they exist in our midst to-day, and are able also to keep the vision of the Redeemed World to be before their eyes. Ruskin in his anxiety for humanity tells us, "But I simply cannot paint, nor read, nor look at minerals, nor do anything else that I like because of the misery that I know of, and see signs of where I know it not. Which no imagination can interpret too bitterly." He cried out in his pitiful misery, "The cruelest man living could not sit at his feast, unless he sat blindfolded." Alas, that so many of us are blindfolded by our selfish instincts!

After we are able to see about us a little more clearly we shall find that we require a very thorough cleansing. After that we shall be clothed in garments of right thinking. We must then feed on the simple and invigorating Word of God's instructions. By the time all this is well accomplished, no doubt, we shall find ourselves quite fit and ready for any duty which the kind Father has given us the *privilege* to perform. It is of little use to set out for our day's work without some preparation. If a man jumps from his bed still half asleep and *sans* bath, *sans* day-clothes, *sans* food, rushes out wildly to perform various tasks that are urging themselves on his sleep-muddled brain, he will also be, doubtless, *sans* success. He would be considered insane. If he try to do holy, wise service for his brother, in this erratic manner, he would be what we know as a fanatic.

We are safe in assuming the position that all healthy persons desire some sort of occupation, some class of exercise on which they may exhaust their reinforced splendid energies. So, may we not claim that the spirit of a man who has strenuously freed himself from selfish unclean thoughts and has robed himself in loving holy desires towards his brother, and has partaken of the Bread of Life, the food for strengthening the soul, and has thus prepared himself for his beloved sunshiny day with its interesting duties and privileges, can no more sit idly in lazy indifference than can a

happy, healthy, laughing child choose to sleep idly all through the summer's day, instead of playing amongst the flowers in very gladness of being? Oh, the joy of living when in perfect health of body! Oh, the joy of living eternally when in health of soul! May God in His infinite mercy and pity grant to our now too inactive souls that vital health which shall bring us this unspeakable joy of living, this holy gladness, this peace which passeth all understanding. There will be no shame in this gladness, for it will by its very vital nature be shared by those by whom we are surrounded. It will be reflected and re-reflected until we in fullness of joy sing, "Glory to God in the Highest" for this so magnificent a gift—a living soul within us.

God's Word tells us again and again of joy and gladness, and here we sit mournful, almost inactive with sobbing in the soul like the restless unsatisfied soughing of the troubled sea. The Father calls down to us from the days of the seers of old—and His words change not—"Awake, put on thy strength, put on thy beautiful garments. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit on thy throne."

When this preparation is accomplished and we feel the vigour of eternal youth thrilling through our beings, we shall have such a clear vision of transient matters, that, I think, at first we shall be frightened, and must shrink in horror at the nightmare with which we are enveloped. We had

thought ourselves goodish sort of persons, quite comfortably full of pity for the erring and oppressed. We had taken considerable pride in this patronising pity of ours. We had felt ourselves to be indeed magnanimous when we allowed Lazarus to share our crumbs with the dogs. We had prided ourselves on our honesty and good conduct. We magnified our *well paid* virtue, complimenting ourselves because we were not accused criminals. But now, when we shall have clearer vision of ourselves, we look to be so unclean, so naked, so weak and wavering. Our honesty and virtue appear so much the result of habit and environment, that we are chagrined at our low moral estate. We find that many of those whom we in our arrogance had despised as being evil, were quite equal, maybe superior, to ourselves, considering their opportunity for moral culture. We shall feel that we are in no way fit to lead these unfortunate children to the higher life, a life to which ourselves have not yet attained. What could our argument be? Shall we go to these brothers and piously say, Be ye clothed and fed, Be ye pure in all your ways and thoughts? Shall we look about us at cruel selfishness and thoughtless indifference amidst the few overfed, would-be rulers and oppressors of our people, and say to them, Be ye generous, unselfish, humble, when we share all these sinful characteristics in less degree—perhaps because our temptation is less? Many

of these have inherited these characteristics and temptations along with their possessions. Those who have amassed great riches, or have succeeded in securing any overmastering oppressive power over the people in general, have not necessarily done so because they are naturally possessed of unholy characteristics. It requires thrift, industry, care to make an honest living to-day. It is so easy for an over-thrifty man to be greedy. It is easy for any of us to be greedy—in a degree, our Master said that he who broke the least of the commandments, broke all. This is a lesson for us when we are in a "I am holier than thou" mood. Not that the cruel sinning of the overfed should be considered less cruel, but that we should not attempt to palliate our crimes of sinful selfishness because they are smaller, when we have never had opportunity to make them large. We need once more to hear the scorching word, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." We are all so guilty of sinning that we may not with impunity cast stones. We are, each, great and small, rich and poor, guilty of all wrong and misery that we are competent to rectify, and do not. This is one of Christ's main doctrines, one that He was constantly teaching in various forms.

We feel that to see a great danger is to receive a call to warn others of it. Surely then we may either gently, or if needs be, urgently, endeavour to draw attention to these human defects which are

common to all, in a spirit of motherly desire to care for the whole of the race, through the arousing of the spiritual and holier instincts of the individual. Though I were sunken to the lips in a quagmire of sinning, still, as a human being it were my duty to use those lips in cries of warning to others. To point to danger on one hand, and to the saving Christ on the other, is one's clear duty, if he be a believer in our Faith, even if he be not of a perfect character. Who but Christ is such? But to be rational, we should be each striving to avoid the quagmire with all our might.

We should ourselves be ever looking upon the Perfect Son of Man, and of God, until we gradually become more nearly like Him. This constant looking on the Christ, we must cultivate, or we shall never really be lovers of our brothers. This is the only way that we can learn to completely eradicate the taint of Cain from our blood. We are each of us our brother's keeper, spiritually, mentally, and physically. We have by nature inherited this responsibility, and cannot avoid its discharge, either well or ill. Cain, the elder, slew his younger brother. Christ Jesus, our elder Brother, slew Himself, that we might live. We walk in the way of either Cain or Christ. We may not do this walking in Christ as a pastime in "slum work," or "charity work" (odious terms), but as a self-disciplinary walking, that is absolutely necessary to our very existence. The pitiful

Father could easily care for these little weak ones without our puny efforts, but we cannot keep our life blood pure enough to enable us to live, without this disciplinary exercise. I do not thus appeal to the selfish instinct of man, but to his self-preservative instinct only. Some time, somewhere, these little weak ones shall be grandly compensated. This I feel I know. Some time, somewhere, we shall die the second death, which is without hope of recovery, if we neglect this holy and life-giving exercise of soul, this bearing of one another's burdens, that we may thus fulfil all law. Stagnation is death. Exercise, even of soul, must have an object. The exercise of the soul is love, of the sacrificial sort, and utterly careless of remuneration in any way. How shall we escape this second death (or the death of the soul) if we neglect the exercise of this so noble loving, and how shall we some day face the Redeemer and those weak ones whom it was our greatest privilege to defend and assist and comfort? And so we ought to prepare ourselves for this purifying service with the greatest of care. We should endeavour each to place himself, in the universal order, and inquire prayerfully of our Creator what He would have us to be and do. We should go into the most rigid training at once. Nothing temporary should be considered as weighing against eternal issues. "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be."

Eternity is so limitless! Surely it were wise to interest oneself in the eternal verities, rather than in magnifying out of all proportion mere earthly issues. Every-day duties are the steps on which we rise, step by step. Never shall we rise to perfection by neglecting our small duties while we dream of an impossible eternal home which shall be free from all responsibility. We can understand, and may have felt at times, too world weary to desire an active eternity, but would an idle eternity give us infinite happiness? Never.

Some of us who believe in a future state, think of it too much from a material or physical standpoint, though I think this mistake is not common. In this case, perhaps, our mind dwells too much on the rarer qualities of the new body for which we hope. We think much of our freedom from weakness, disease, and all infirmity, to which we now yield far too easily. We dream of floating by volition from star to star in adventurous curiosity or laudable desire to know scientific truths. We want garments, and lo, we are clothed as we desire. We wish to see friends, and lo, we are by their side. This dreamland view is, I think, not so general as the opposite, or too vague one. In the latter case we think much that we have no more reason for thinking than we have in the more materialistic mood. Some of us who think we believe in the Saviour of men, dwell too much on our wonderful happiness to be, and of the perfection which we

hope to have miraculously thrust upon us, as we joyfully appear in the presence of the Lord, on our departure from this life. *Forgiveness, on repentance,* we have surely a certain hope of, both now and then; but where shall we find promise of this miraculous, instantaneous, change of character, in God's Word other than at the moment of conversion to the Faith? Even then it is described as a thing of growth, after one has *turned* to do that which is just and right in Christ's Kingdom, and through the avenue of *serving one another.*

From perfection unto perfection is the teaching of Scripture. We are told that if we are Christ's disciples, in very truth, we are in the presence of an illustrious company. Paul, who had been taken up into the heavens, either in the spirit, or actually, knew things which he doubtless saw, so spake with certainty thus:

"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel."

I cannot conceive of or imagine an assembly like this luxuriating in a blissful, dreamy idleness. By the agony of Gethsemane, I am sure that our

Redeemer is in a state of intense activity, and that His Church must also be. If I am fortunate enough to be ultimately in this so select a company, my soul assures me that I shall share His travail. Perhaps, to those who do not crave for celestial service, with the fitness will come the desire. If we are to share His gladness over a world redeemed from sin, we must also share His sacrificial service in this life, and from instinct and evidence, in the next also. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." Jesus the Christ while on the Cross said to the repentant thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." We learn that Christ went immediately to preach to the spirits in prison. Doubtless the repentant thief remained in the Master's presence and received the same teaching that was then heard for the first time by these—or so we seem safe in presuming. That the "thief" did not ascend to heaven at once is certain, as Jesus the Christ certainly did not. John, who kept in spirit very close to the Crucified One, tells us that to Mary, on the morning that He rose, He said, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father: but go unto my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God." After this He told the eleven disciples that all authority and power had been given unto Him in heaven and on earth. We must find that this "Paradise" was not heaven, because the disobedient spirits were

imprisoned there, and it is inconceivable that these should be thus confined in heaven. We must admit that it was some "Abode of the dead" to which they went that day, both Christ and the repentant thief, the one to preach, and the other to learn. All this gives us an idea of a world of great activity and attainment which may be very near and around us. Moses and Elias appeared and conversed with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. We must see it that they were actively alive. Christ Jesus said to His disciples whom He was leaving, "Let not your hearts be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many abiding places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you." Many mansions, or abiding places, a state of suitability to environment. When one gathers up evidence, and perhaps by instinct *imagines* much more, of the possibilities of the next phase of life, and of its ever lifting and widening effect on the new born child of God, our petty, and mean-spirited, and short-sighted standpoints stand out in such relief that we are filled with shame. We do not pretend or hope to understand much of the vision of John, but from it we must learn that a most crucial and refining time shall come alike to each soul, each system, and the whole earth race. The fires of the Perfect One shall purify and destroy. As I appeal only to believers, I know that we must all agree to this, and must

also impress on the unbelieving world the sincerity and surety of our convictions, and we shall thus grow from perfection to perfection, as a whole race of souls.

By our love for, not only our fellow-believers, but for the oppressed and the arrogant, for the foolish and the wise, for the cruel and the merciful, for the evil and the good, persons by whom we are surrounded, shall we testify our sincerity. Our burden is great if we wish to be true followers of the Redeemer, as our labour is to help to save the people from their sinning—ourselves included. All this vast and illustrious army previously mentioned, is watching how we fulfil our task, pitying our weakness, stimulating us to better effort if we are willing to receive it. How does it look to them when we hate our neighbour, when we injure our fellow-citizen, when we lie, steal, kill? How shall we face Holiness when we are so lacking in the very rudiments of holiness? How shall we face Christ Who made the uttermost giving up of Himself, when we are selfish enough to withhold that which we cannot possibly require, from our brother, who is suffering the cruellest deprivation? How shall we face this assembly that has valiantly conquered evil tendencies, and is now arrayed in white robes of holiness, when we debauch our every instinct with self-indulgence, arrogant tyranny, murderous withholding of our surplus from the dying; when we are indifferent to mental and physical degener-

acy, and are also indifferent to the spiritual starvation of our people, ourselves included? We *are* each of us our brother's keeper, God is witness to it. How do we perform our duty; or better, our holy privilege?

This is the most vital question that can come to us as individuals and as a nation, and so we urge ourselves to prepare for better service towards the helping in of the Kingdom of God in our State. Already we see two forces strenuously opposing one another. Some, perhaps not wholly conscious of their importance in the preparation for the Kingdom of God, are filled with a determination to correct ills, in order that we may rise in quality as a nation of men. This lifting of the individual is the one work of the hour. All other service must accommodate itself to this. To this service every man, woman, and child must lend full aid. Those who oppose kindly measures in any form, are actually opposing the Kingdom of God, though we must hope that they are not always fully conscious of the enormity of their short-sighted, murderous, and suicidal conduct. We see all sorts of systems passing under the scourge of cords. We see wrongs written up in full, to an alarmed and indignant populace. All this is the judgment of the world which is now taking place. It was due, it is here. God never fails in His word or works.

Many of us, especially in our aspiring youthful days, greatly admire the historic heroes of our race.

Many of us may even have dreamed of emulating some of them. Later in life this, usually unfounded, hope naturally dies for want of sustenance. The history of these heroes always tells us one tale, if we will but bear it, namely, that these giants each did the service that he alone could do.

In the initial sense all real heroes are merely good citizens. Their greatness lies partly in circumstance, and partly in their having attempted to do the service that they alone could do better than any one else. These were too conscious of their gift of doing to be hindered by self-consciousness or mock-humility. These felt that they *must do* this service for their brothers, that they *could do* it, and they were filled with an invincible determination that *they would* do it. This brought success to *the extent that Providence permitted.* But the real measure of their heroism *was the measure of their willingness to do service in the cause of citizenship.* A citizen is his brother's keeper; that is percisely what citizenship means in its last analysis. If each of us were a hero in this manner, the result would be a race of giants in moral status, and in time, of mental and physical strength, and great degree of general perfection. In the giving of great gifts of money or lands, many of us are most narrowly limited in our usefulness, but a little child may be as real a hero as a millionaire, and is much more likely to be one. Poor or suffering persons are proverbially more thought-

ful to others than those who have never wanted or suffered. The widow's mite was the largest gift in the day's giving, according to our Lord's valuation—because she gave out of her need. The others had doled a little out of their plenty. I do not think we really give acceptably before God until we feel the weight of the loss of our gift. We cannot do acceptable service until we allow the burdens of our common brotherhood to rest so heavily upon us that it is all ourselves can bear to hold up under our share of it. This is more nearly sharing the Redeemer's service for the human brotherhood. Our desire must be to lift and save our brother, and not to be known as great persons; that is a petty, selfish reason for noble endeavour, and must end in a ridiculous fighting of windmills, a rescuing of what does not require our aid. A real hero is so intent on his object that he forgets to pose, and is too conscious of his position to be mock-modest. Christ, the only One who has been perfect in both His humanity and in His asserted power, was not hindered by sneers, nor was He diverted from His mission by adulation. When the High Priest asked Him, Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? Jesus said, "I am; And ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." This caused the poor foolish High Priest to rend his clothes in vexation—but the Son of the Blessed went on His way to

finish the mission to which He was called. He is still faithful to this confessed call, and will be until all things are in submission to the Perfect Law. If we wish to work in Christ for the good of humanity, we must have this same stedfastness of purpose, ever lifting our eyes upward towards the end of the eternal pathway where dwelleth the Blessed One. We must all help, each in his small way, to bind up the broken and strengthen that which is sick. We must purify ourselves and partake of the Divine Nature. We must be diligent, wise, self-controlled, kind. We must have our eyes opened that we may see our nakedness, and we must pray for, strive after, the clean, unselfish garments of holiness, and so shall we be in a fit condition to help to redeem a dead race into a company of risen and renewed souls, like unto Christ Jesus, our Elder Brother, our Keeper. We must have the taint of Cain which is in our nature washed away in the life-giving blood of the Lamb.

"He died that we might be forgiven,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heaven,
Saved by His precious blood.
Oh, dearly, dearly has He loved,
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do."

C. F. Alexander.

CHAPTER VI

"FATHER, I HAVE SINNED"

"But when he came to himself he said, I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: . . . But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion."

LUKE xv. parts of 17, 18, 20.

' 'The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." ACTS xvii. 30, 31.

"Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, so that there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things. . . . And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."

ACTS iii. 19, 20, 21, 23.

THE above teaching seems to me to be very clear, lucid, and direct in its meaning. We are not aware that it has been successfully challenged by any critic, be he of the "higher" or "lower" type. We are not aware that any sophistical controversialist has succeeded in eradicating all meaning out of it. We therefore feel

safe in presuming that its intended meaning is clearly expressed for our instruction and admonition. So, as we are especially addressing those of the Faith, we are all of us obliged to accept this authoritative and judicial test as to our fitness for the continued life, or our condemnation to death. There is no evading it. Personally, we feel intensely humiliated through the little introspection which we have been able to exercise. Many to whom I appeal have had very great natural opportunity for building a good moral character, and yet when under our partial awakening we see ourselves in a more nearly true light, our very souls must blush with shame for our petty shortcomings, for our small meannesses, our uncharity, our indifference to wretchedness, our unwillingness for self-sacrifice, and our exceeding many faults. We ought to understand that we must die if it thus continues, for we read, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," and that if we do not hearken to Jesus Christ we shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. If we cannot bring ourselves to a state of repentance on the grounds of horror of sinning—and some of us cannot—let us begin by remembering that self-preservation demands that we repent in order that we may not die. After attending to the more careful culture of the soul for a while from this standpoint, our spiritual senses will become more refined and we shall then shrink in horror from the soul disgrace

of greedy and sensual thoughts and actions. In time we shall lose sight of even the self-preserving instinct, and shall see no law in God's universal order excepting service towards the ever upward movement of all things, systems, and peoples, amidst which we are placed by our Creator and Preserver.

We may well ask ourselves why this repentance is so essential a quality in us. Of course the answer is not difficult to find. But do we fully realize the importance of repentance even though we know that it is commanded again and again, not only to the unbelieving but also to the professed disciples of Christ? We might well illustrate repentance as being the hinge of the door into the Way of Life. The door will only open by the use of the hinge. The Way of Life is the sinless life. If we are sinning, and are conscious of it, and are indifferent to the certain consequences of a continuation of it, how shall we enter the sinless path to eternal life? The door is closed, we can only open it one way. Or, we may look upon repentance as a change of standpoint. Christ told a learned ruler of the Jews who came to inquire of Him of His doctrine, "Except one be born anew (or from above), he cannot see the Kingdom of God." How can one be satisfied with a new standpoint, until he be dissatisfied with the old one? He cannot for long have two standpoints, and remain well balanced either in intellect or soul. He will eventually settle down

to either God or Mammon. If God be God let us serve the race from His eternal standpoint. If Mammon be the true God, by all means let us serve him. From this crucial choosing we cannot for long escape. Repentance is the *turning point* on which we decide which it shall be. I address those who believe in the historic Christ and do not dispute the authority of His instructing commands. We may be one of this class and yet require repentance more than one who is an unbeliever or who is a pronounced criminal. Christ Jesus took the dying thief with Him from the Cross, that He might instruct him. He told His self-righteous wrangling disciples, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." He forgave the adulterous woman, commanding her that she *sin no more*. After casting out the seven demons from Mary Magdalene we find that He accepted her service in His holy work. *She had repented and had been forgiven.*

Christ instructs us regarding forgiveness following repentance amongst ourselves in our daily intercourse with one another thus, "If thy brother sin, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." If our friend does us an injury and is not sorry for it, he will doubtless do it again when opportunity occurs.

If he through a natural besetment injure us, and is always afterwards grieved that he fell from the kind way, and is thus repentant, we must invariably forgive him as we in like circumstances wish to be forgiven. We are each weak at some point and can with difficulty refrain from some injurious influence or work on another. So we must repent towards one another, and hope to be forgiven. This many of us do, in a *poor degree.* Christ is stronger than we, and can always do that which we are, sometimes, only strong enough to desire to do, and often, we are too weak even to desire.

He forgave those who took part in His crucifixion, saying, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." But, if we knowingly crucify Him afresh, and put Him to open shame by our bad discipleship, have we assurance of forgiveness? Jesus had gone into the house of a sinner named Zacchæus, and His followers murmured at it. But the man had repented. As a thank-offering he had immediately given the Lord half of his goods, for the use of the poor, and had promised that if he had exacted wrongfully from any man he would restore him fourfold. Little wonder that our Lord was a willing guest at his table. This man was better company than the religious but unrepentant class whom the Lord scathingly designated as "Offspring of vipers" because they professed religious fervour, but were full of unholy deeds of selfishness, and were utterly unrepentant.

In the vision of John, Christ calls to five of the seven Churches of Asia to repent of their sins; but to the two He gives only words of consolation and assurance. The Church of Ephesus had done many good works and had much virtue, but its members had not been true to their first love; so He said to them, "Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent." The Church in Pergamum had been stedfast in its allegiance, but had allowed false teaching and idolatrous usages to creep in. He warns it: "Repent therefore; or else I come to thee quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of my mouth. . . . To him that overcometh, to him will I give of the hidden manna." To the Church in Thyatira, He said, "I know thy works, and thy love and faith and ministry and stedfastness, and that thy last works are more than the first." But these people had received a seductive and idolatrous woman, and were thus corrupted by satanic teaching. This message is exceedingly significant, for this Church must still exist as He exhorts those in her who are not corrupted by the wicked woman, thus: "Nevertheless that which ye have, hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give authority over the nations," etc. But as for those who were adulterous and

idolatrous in this same Church, he promised death to them and their children. The Church of Sardis He accuses of having a name of living, but being dead. He calls to it to repent or He will come upon it, but to the few in it who overcome, He will confess their names before the Father and His angels. The Laodiceans He found so lukewarm that He cast them out of His mouth. They seem to represent the self-satisfied indifference of a large class of professors of Christ's religion in this day, which class unless roused, will when He comes be utterly cast out, a useless mass. But to the Church at Smyrna He was so tenderly kind. "Fear not," He said, "the things which thou art about to suffer; . . . Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life." And so to the Philadelphians also was He loving and encouraging, thus:

"Because thou didst keep the word of my stedfastness, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. . . . He that overcometh, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go out thence no more."

Surely the Christian Church of to-day would do well to pass through the refining fires of these messages to the seven Churches. As seven denotes completeness, and is often used as such by Christ,

and by the inspired writers, we would expect the seven Churches here spoken of to be figurative of our entire Christendom, with all its divisions, its denominations, shadings of doctrine and usages; and with all its measures of holy usefulness, and unholy pretence, its greedy self-aggrandisement, its loathsome indifference, and its intensely earnest, Christlike self-sacrificial service towards the Kingdom of Heaven. Five out of the seven had reason for repentance. Doubtless so shall we find this ratio to exist amongst ourselves in the entire nominal Christian Church of to-day.

This apocalyptic message was too wide in its meaning to be intended only for the Churches to whom it was addressed. More than that, Christ said, "I will come," and as yet His coming is not acknowledged amongst us. Some of us expect it almost now, right at our door. The gleaming of His Presence is already throwing rays of light into most unusual places, and uncovering to man's indignant realization many most unholy and inhuman usages which in our blindness we have allowed to exist to crush and impoverish our fellow human beings, the brethren of Jesus Christ. In this vision we find a vivid picture of this time of trial for those who choose that they will not repent. Read and re-read this vision until you get its true significance, and see if there is no resemblance, no relation, to our immediate day, this day of Godlike hope and of satanic despair. Is there any word so

important to-day as the call to repentance? It is the one call which echoes all down the ages from Adam's disobedience, from Cain's murderous instinct, all down a warring, brawling, greedy, aye, carnivorous race. And still we heed it not. It was not sufficient that the Christ came, lived, died, and rose to His throne. We fell to idolatrously worshipping His human passion and the agony of His dying groans; and still men at war with men heeded not the love songs issuing from celestial heights. Still we hate in bitterness, still we take to ourselves that which we cannot use, still we allow our human affairs to proceed in such a manner that some of us are very nearly imbecile in mind and soul from idleness and luxury, and some of us from worklessness and starvation. The mass of us are worse than the animals over which we are given control. We strive after the things of the world in such a rabid carnivorous manner that we have no time to pause and think. Some few are in a degree *kindly* as they journey along the mad way. When public questions arise, the accepted standpoint is obvious enough, even to the careless eye. This will fill my coffers. This will pay. This will make me great. And the mad scramble is increasing in velocity, as the years roll on, in the merchandise of horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men.

But this can only continue to be our method for a short while now. Whether we repent of it or not,

it shall cease by the authority of our Redeemer, when He shall have come into the full possession of His poor erring Kingdom on earth. When we shall sing in gladness, "The kingdom of the world is become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever." When the four and twenty elders will worship God thus:

"We give thee thanks, O Lord God, the Almighty, who art and who wast; because thou hast taken thy great power and didst reign. And the nations were wrath, and thy wrath came, and the time of the dead to be judged, and the time to give their reward to thy servants the Prophets, and to the Saints, and to them that fear thy name, the small and the great; and to destroy them that destroy the earth." "And I (John) heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. . . . He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

"Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is."

If we are to be rewarded according to our works, we shall without much difficulty perceive that we are in the most desperate need of true repentance for our strangely un-Christlike methods of living. If the Lord Christ would but break up this unfeeling callousness of our stony indifferent hearts,

so that we might instinctively turn in disgust and shame from our old methods, and begin now, in all departments of life, to employ the methods of the Kingdom of Heaven only, how soon would we become a happier, holier people! This I believe He will do, aye, is now doing.

"Pity from thine eye let fall;
By a look my soul recall;
Now, the stone to flesh convert,
Cast a look, and break my heart.
Now, incline me to repent;
Let me now my fall lament;
Now, my foul revolt deplore;
Weep, believe, and sin no more."

C. Wesley.

We usually hear the parable from which the text of this chapter is quoted used as a call to the unconverted soul to turn towards the new life in Christ, or in common phrase to turn from a godless life to a Christian one. I fail utterly to see any justification for this view of our Lord's parable. The Prodigal Son was as much a son as his brother who stayed at home with his father, and did his duty as a son should do. This parable was addressed to the Pharisees and Scribes, who were well versed in religious teachings and usages, a class of people who stood at that time for the best there was in religious relation to God their Father. It was not addressed to the godless. Forgiveness following true repentance to all was certainly taught by it, but the *call* was to the already religious persons,

those of the Faith—the Jewish Faith. To carry out the type in our Christian dispensation, we must take it as an appeal, not to unbelievers, who are certainly not sons, but to those of us who do believe in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, but who have spent, and are still spending, our all in riotous living. To the fallen Church, the Sons of God by birth, is this call addressed by our Lord to-day, and who shall say that it does not apply with justice.

As Israel has always been a typical people, we shall find many of her prefigurements being carried out in our nation, or spiritual Israel. There is one of the most essentially vital of all lessons contained in our union of the Church and the State in this country (England). The population of a country is composed of responsible individuals, each of whom has a right to a—shall we say—two-sided opinion or belief. The one, his religious; the other, his political opinion or belief. Take any thoughtful man and we shall find that he always has fixed convictions on these two lines of thought. All other moral convictions grow out of these, either from one or the other or both. He may love art, or literature, or travel, or the aimless society life, but these are not moral convictions but avocations, or pastimes only. How he uses his talent, or love of art, or literature, or travel, or his influence in his social life, is a matter that grows out of his moral convictions. The word

Church is quite correctly used as taking precedence of the word *State*. Our State is always of the same moral status as a whole, as our Church is in its individuality. A Church's moral standing may not by any means be identical with the status of its confession. A Church's moral standing before its Judge is shown by the extent to which that body of persons have individually carried out the ideals of its teaching. How we may ourselves judge such a body is to observe how these ideals are striven after in this body in its *political life*. The State cares for its children just as its religious heart is true to its beliefs and ideals. I repeat that a united Church and State is *typical* of this truth, and am in no way differentiating amongst Christian denominations in favour of the Established Church. The Church is *only peculiar as being typical, not as being superior*, to Nonconformity, by any means. The true Church of Christ is selected from the *all* by right of its Christliness only. We can sympathize with Lowell when he sings:

"I love the rites of England's Church,
I love to hear and see
The Priest and people reading slow
The solemn litany;
I love to hear the glorious swell
Of chanted psalm and prayer,
And the deep organ's bursting heart
Throb through the shivering air.
And then I murmur, 'Surely God
Delighteth here to dwell;

This is the temple of His Son
Whom He doth love so well.'
But when I hear the Creed, which saith,
This Church alone is His,
I feel within my soul, that He
Hath purer shrines than this."

It might be quite possible for the State to assume the position of being a purer body than the Church, but that can never be actually true, because it is only as a Christlike body of politicans that a State can do Christlike service for the children of that State. These may not be *notable catechists*, but they must be *sincere Christians* or their service will not be vitally beneficial to the people. So it is only as a type that union of Church and State need continue for a time. The *actual* Church of Christ is wofully small, or so it looks, and it was prophesied to be so at the end of Satan's reign. "Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find *the* faith on the earth?" Christ queries.

In previous chapters we have been endeavouring to find out in what it is that our Christian religion consists, from the Master's and His Apostles' teachings; and from our finding, we feel convinced that there is quite sufficient evidence against us to justify the question, Have we the Faith at all in our hearts, or is it that we are as yet satisfied with spending our God-given substance, our talents, in insane and criminal ways, in riotous living? I am terribly afraid that we shall be reduced to a despairing soul-hunger before we shall be ready to

arise and go to our Father, and say, "Father, I have sinned." Or is it that our soul-hunger has already driven us to feed amongst the swine in our strivings after satisfaction of soul, and are we now, as a Christian people, almost ready to give up the husks and go in search of the beneficent forgiveness of our ever merciful Father?

The yearning father saw the son afar off when he had yet gone but part of the way towards home. As Christ's parable teaches us in this so sweet a way, I know that He is looking for us now to come to our senses and hasten home to Him. As I scan the daily newspapers, the one thing that impresses me the most deeply, is this inexorable unearthing of satanic oppressive usages in the various departments which go to make up our community. I think that many of us who are directly or indirectly responsible for these so atrocious and un-Christlike abuses, may well call for the rocks to fall on us and hide us from this scathing judgment under which we must soon writhe. Surely there will be much mourning as some of our ill-gotten possessions pass out of our greedy keeping. Surely we shall smart under the finger of scorn, that even God will point at us.

"The righteous also shall see it, and fear, and shall laugh at him, saying, Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness." The Lord will laugh at him; for he seeth that his

day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, to slay such as are upright in the way. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. . . . I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green tree in its native soil. But one passed by, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found."

"I also will laugh in the day of your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as a desolation, and your calamity cometh on as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you. Then will they call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently, but they shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of Jehovah, they would none of my counsel, they depised all my reproof; therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the backsliding of the simple shall slay them, and the careless ease of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell securely, and shall be quite without fear of evil."

Shall we be a derision to the righteous and to God Himself, personified in Wisdom? Or shall we look about us into the particular methods of our lives, and in thus seeing our baseness shall we decide to arise to our possibilities as sons, to our forgiveness and our restoration?

It is within the organized Church Catholic that

repentance must begin. Who, that is at all familiar with the prophetic writings, can deny this? It was to be in the last days, before the restoration. Who can be so foolish as to doubt that we are in the last days of the prophetic reaching? In looking into the particular and intricate workings of denominational Christendom, who shall dare to say that their forecast was a false one? Inspired writing is not always understood until after fulfilment, but in some instances the reading is not very difficult to the observant, and to those who are open to conviction, even of the preceding or contemporary peoples. The wise men were looking for the Christ-child and they found Him under the guiding star. If we are wise in the reading of the inspired Word, and in reading human affairs today; if we follow closely, we shall easily know where to find the appearance of the Christ-king, the Man Whom God hath ordained to save the people from their sins. If we do not seek and find Him, and repent of our unbrotherliness towards the children of His Kingdom, He will find us, and great will be our shame, when we are uncovered to the world, and to ourselves, in all our wickedness.

If we believe the story of Christ and His divine mission, if we believe that He has already begun to judge the things of the earth, as to what is fit for the new régime, and what is not, if we think ourselves to be in a state of being saved by Him from our sins, how shall we face Him a little later on,

if we do not repent from our ways, and turn our eyes ever on the heavenly standpoint, and work earnestly to help Him cleanse us from all our sinning, so that we may be fit temples for better service in the Eternal Order of the Father? How shall the salvation of the world at large be accomplished, when we, the witnesses, are so untrue to the divine light? We should be such witnesses as would draw all the world to belief in our Redeemer. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

Did not this have a twofold meaning? Is it not for us to raise the status of practical Christianity up from the earth into a more sacrificial plane, a plane which we may share with our Lord? Would not this witnessing from us draw all men towards the Saviour, Whom we so piously profess to love, and even dare to profess that we serve? Do we serve Him, or are we joined to Mammon? What does the general world think of our piety? Is it always sure of our brotherliness? Have we, as persons and nation, any reason for godly sorrowing? We must each make our own answer to our Judge, Who can read our secret hearts.

Judge not that ye be not judged. We cannot always read each other's guilt or holiness aright. God only can do that. We had better each see to it that our own guilt is cleansed, and that we ourselves become holy, lest the Master say to us, "Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of

thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." And so, we are only justified in giving the most general warning to each other, for we may not see so very clearly ourselves. We had better ask for the guidance of the Spirit of Truth so that we shall not err in vision.

It is such a kindly blessing that we are promised, even forgiveness when we turn from our errors. And we shall be cleansed from all our filthiness of defilement if we ask for it. And we shall have right standpoints when we are made wise by the Spirit; as we are promised the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, Who shall remind us of all that we should never have forgotten. And so the Father has compassion on His erring children, and brings them again into fellowship with Him, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. This is our stedfast hope, and we are indeed unworthy if we do not hasten to justify Him, in this so merciful a compassion.

In my childhood days, some old-fashioned Christian men and women, pioneers in a new and stern country, used weekly to meet in a simple prayer-meeting service. A favourite hymn with them, and one I seldom now hear, was

"O happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God.
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.

He taught me how to watch and pray,
And live, rejoicing every day.
Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away."

These are all, I believe, singing this same theme around the Throne of God. I saw but one of these strong souls in her last moments of earth life. I had seen this Christian live, I saw her die. Calmly, expectantly, serenely she went from us, out into her new life. I felt that it was a well completed earth life. I knew that I had seen a redeemed soul pass into the presence of its Lord in serene and hopeful joy. Nothing can efface this from my mind, while memory remains. I have been privileged to see others of them live to old age, and I know too that they have each passed away as the ripe sheaf, and in great content of soul. I have had the privilege of intimacy with several souls younger than these sturdy pioneers of my native country, souls who have been strong and valiant, even heroic, in the face of difficulties and suffering, and in noble, though unobtrusive, endeavour. Some have laid their burden down in youth, some at high noon, some still live. These old and young are enough to keep my own soul ever in a hopeful mood of attainment in respect of the higher life. The witness of their integrity, endeavour, and endurance, through all phases of life; their unswerving trust in the Redeeming Saviour, their humility in failures, their

repentance over errors, their ready acknowledgment of their many weaknesses, and their entire conviction that at eventide all would be well, are more precious to me than all the theological tomes in Christendom.

Repentance is a natural thing to a sincere and growing soul in the face of its many errors. After repentance, we are always the more ready to seek our way home to our Father Who is ever on the pitiful lookout for our return. While we are returning, our face is ever towards our home—our Father's House.

If I have not, perhaps, attained to the joyful assurance of some of my sainted friends, I can join in truest sincerity with those who sing with the perturbed spirit of Newman,

> "So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
> Will lead me on,
> O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
> The night is gone.
> And with the morn those angel faces smile,
> Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile."

CHAPTER VII

"A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR HIM"

"And many of the Children of Israel shall he turn unto the Lord their God. And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for Him."

LUKE i. 16, 17.

"He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said Isaiah the prophet. . . . On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!"

JOHN i. 23, 29.

"I pray not that thou shouldst take them from the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth." JOHN xvii. 15, 16, 17.

IF we are to be "A people prepared for Him" we must be a people cleansed from *wilful sinning*. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." It may with reason be inferred from many passages of Scripture, that sinning against our brothers, is sinning against God; and is that so very strange when we remember that

God is the Father of us all? Why should He not resent our wicked treatment of His other children? Looking at it from a family standpoint, how could He help being severe with us, if we persist in injuring His other children? And what is so ignoble is that it is always the weaker children we hurt most cruelly. They are the only ones that will submit to our fratricidal conduct. Could we expect our Perfect Father to respect us for this? And as Christ is our Perfected Elder Brother, how can He tolerate this cruel instinct in us, this greedy spirit of ours which strives to fatten on what is crushed out of the lives of the helpless? He said, "Inasmuch as ye did it (or did it not) unto one of these least, ye did it (or did it not) unto me." How could it be otherwise if He be a kind and protecting Elder Brother? The lesson is clearly evident that the complement of our duty towards God is our duty towards man. On these two duties hang all the Law and the Prophets. The cleansing of our hearts and lives from sin is therefore twofold in its action and issue. First, in our willingness to turn from our disobedience to God's Law, and our insulting doubt of Him; and secondly, to be willing to carry out His Law, as it bears on the lives of our fellow human beings. Either, without the other, is void. Unless our hearts are in harmony with our Father and His government—under His Son—and also with our fellow-man, our religion is void. It is of no use to

cry piously, as some of us do, Lord! Lord! unless we have ministered to the race in the way for which we each are best fitted, be it physical, intellectual, or spiritual. Neither is there merit in doing vainglorious and ostentatious service in an almost antagonistic spirit to organized religion, as some of us do; although by the latter means some needy ones do benefit, though by the higher law we be not credited with the kindness.

So our hearts and minds must first be cleansed from wrong ideas of what duty really is. Now this is quite a difficult and intricate function for the soul of a man to perform in sincerity. "Stern daughter of the Voice of God!" Stern indeed thou art in thy requirements, but how beneficent in thy issues and thy rewards!

If there is one point in the reconstruction of the brotherhood of man in which we must be very lenient with each other, it is in the matter of fixed ideas. Some of these ideas have been grounded into us by years of training just as our language has been, just as our mode of dressing our physical bodies has been. It is right here that our imminent danger lies. Many ideas from which we must be cleansed, we now hold sacred, or at least inviolate. Some persons whom we may think of as being infidels, may only be earnest seekers after truth. Some religious persons whom we may think of as being highly hypocritical may only be narrow in their vision of what true religion

consists in. Habit is so powerful a factor in human life that many of us accept the digested spiritual and economic beliefs and usages of our forefathers *in toto* and endeavour to transmit them to posterity, and think ourselves wise in so doing. And are we not righteous in our intentions in so doing if we believe that these convictions of our forebears are based on wisdom and truth? Certainly we must be. But, do we prove all things and hold fast only that which is good? This is the active principle on which we as individuals, or nations, rise or fall, develop, or die by process of inward decay. One often has a terrible struggle in this sense to know which voice is speaking from out his ego; his conscience, or his habits and the conventional usage which environ him like a network. So I claim that in the reconstruction of the brotherhood of man on the lines of real and absolute Christianity, we must be very lenient with one another and bear one another's burdens, until we have all of the Cain-like hate, the cruel uncharity, washed out of our hearts. "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." If we obey this command we shall try to see things from each other's viewpoint and give good measure where we cannot agree. And we shall surely not agree on minor points. I fail to see two similar flowers or leaves. I think they tell us that not even two blades of grass in all the beautiful meadows that the good Father has given

us are quite alike in detail. Is it to be wondered that two human beings differ in contour and colour of mental make up? Judge not that ye be not judged. How can we judge our brother's mind rightly? We can easily see if in conduct he openly breaks human-made laws, or some of the ten laws given us by God through Moses, but who shall judge his brother as to the conviction of his mind regarding religious or economic questions? I have stumbled upon the strangest cases of spiritual blindness at times where the intent, I was forced to believe, was most righteous. Where persons refused to hear, or believe, that we are called upon to do other than try to be moral ourselves; where they held that the pain and sorrow and suffering was overdrawn and "could not be helped anyway"; where they insisted that some classes of people never could "get along" and that it would always be so. What can one do but pray, "O God, open thou their eyes"?

If we can awaken these sleepy ones, well and good, but if not, we are scarcely justified in suspecting them of being deliberately unsympathetic. We must be very careful in this arrogant method of judging others because their ideas are still fixed, while perhaps by some means over which we had no control or voice, ours became more flexible. God made many pairs of eyes to see with and ears to hear with, but he made Truth a unity.

We may be too sleepy as yet to search wisely for truth, or we may be approaching her from many directions in our instinctive search for her. But we shall never find her while we are quarrelling on the way. We may certainly help each other to find her by the kindly spoken word of direction, given in a helpful spirit only. But we each have one common source of knowledge to assist us in knowing what is good and what is true. It is not however our inherited convictions or our divers catechisms, but God's illumined Word. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path."

If we studied God's Word more carefully and with less preconceived ideas, we should find plenty of reason given for a united effort to cleanse ourselves as entities of a great nation. It is a significant fact to many of us, and one often overlooked by many of us, that there are few issues which arise in our modern everyday life, or in the more general public affairs, which may not be made quite clear to us as to our duty, by the teaching of Christ only. In some instances, nay most, the teaching of the Old Testament refers to the old law only, that which Christ refers to as lasting only till John the Baptist. Many of these utterances refer in prophetic warning to the time of the Kingdom of God which the prophets foresaw was to be established on the earth in the last days. These latter are for our admonition and instruction.

But with Christ's teaching there is no such distinction. We must weigh it all as though it were gold. It is more than spiritual gold; it is a collection of rarest gems, precious stones, that shall be the crowning riches of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

In this mirror of dazzling redemptive truths we shall see ourselves in all our filth and hunger and ragged nakedness. If we thus see ourselves to be in a state that requires our complete restoration, then surely it is our natural mental attitude to be in a state of repentance. But of what use is repentance without the cleansing to follow? It is part of the preparation. It was this process that restored the prodigal son to usefulness and his father's favour. Then surely it is our next duty to pray, each of us in full sincerity of mind and soul, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right (or stedfast) spirit within me." For we can do no lasting good works until we are thus fitted. If we have not the desire within us to be wholly cleansed we must pray for a clearer vision of our sinfulness so that we shall shrink in horror from our defilements of spirit and mind. We had better examine, each for ourselves, our fixed ideas and usages. In all movements, the mind, or somebody's mind, is the first point of attack, and I think that we shall ultimately conclude that it is the only one; as all conduct is the result of thought, or want of thought. So

every thought of the mind must be tried by the teaching of Christ, and we shall soon see just where we are clean, and where we are unclean. We have noted that habit is extremely potent in controlling our thoughts. This being true we shall examine our mental attitudes by the light of the best we know. This is a self-examination that is absolutely necessary, since no one of us is capable of judging another, without prejudice, on any given subject accurately.

At times we may find ourselves in a quandary from which it is difficult to find our way out clearly. What shall we do? We may have to decide a course of action on some question in almost a moment, with no time for quiet retreat and study; indeed this is the common rule. How shall we be sure to do right? How shall we be sure that our mental attitude is clear from selfishness, in so short a deciding moment? Is it not wisest to decide to do the most kindly, the most just, thing that suggests itself at the time, at the same moment breathing a prayer to God to keep our *motive* clean in our decision? What better can we do? Is this our habit? If in the afterward, that follows all our actions, we see where we think we might have done better, we shall at least have learned a lesson for future guidance. Sometimes our conduct is better in motive and result than it looks to a careless eye. We had better not judge even our own weak selves too harshly. We had better keep our eye on the

Perfect One in order that we may become more like Him. Some of our uncleanness takes a vast deal of patient endeavour before it is fully removed, and even then it seems to have a recurring tendency, to reappear in us. Sometimes this is a wearisome process, and our hearts grow faint with discouragement.

As service for the race is our only legitimate avocation in earth life, we had better not wait for entire cleanness of heart and mind before beginning to exercise this kinglike function of humanity. "That ye bear one another's burdens." How shall we ever arrive at perfection if we do not help one another? But, one will say, in his zeal for religiosity, Christ will make us all perfect some day. Will He, think you? Perhaps it would be well for our over-zealous friend to look into this subject for awhile. Perhaps he needs some of his fixed ideas shaken somewhat. We delight to agree with him, that in, and by, Christ, shall we be cleansed and made perfect, from perfection unto perfection. But for a miraculous perfection of cleanliness to be thrust upon a soul of man by our Redeemer is not taught nor inferred in all our Scripture. Of Himself it is said,

"Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which

he suffered: and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author (or cause) of eternal salvation."

Christ is in this quotation affirmed to be the cause of salvation to those who *obey* Him. If our salvation depends on our *obedience* to Christ, I think that some of us had better re-set a few of our fixed ideas. If the very anointed One conquered with such struggling and prayer, shall we pitifully weak and unclean ones escape all endeavour? The *cause* of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey Him*, the text said. It is in the light of this *obedience* that our service must take form. If we do not feel willing to obey, nor desire to be used in service, we had better make a study of Paul's warning that follows in the next chapter. It is a very crucial word to those who believe in Christ as Redeemer, but who do not obey Him as to works. James cannot excel Paul here in intensity of exhortation regarding service. If we bear nothing but thorns and thistles, we are described rejected, and "nigh unto a curse" in our community.

We cannot live one day without having made use of our opportunity to influence the state of our fellows, either for good or for ill. As there is no absolute stagnation in matter, neither is there absolute stagnation in a soul's influence. We are either aiding Satan by tainting every other soul with whom we come in contact, by our uncleanness; or we are aiding the Lord Christ to bring about His

complete reign, by giving what we can of good to the race and endeavouring with them to live as cleanly and sanely as it is our privilege to be capable of doing. We each radiate influence, be we as exclusive and reserved in our habits as we may. Our responsibility is at once a dread thing and a privilege. We must, in a Christlike way, strive with tears and prayers that we do no wrong to our fellow, or else how shall we face our Elder Brother?

"Exert thy will, and use it to control;
God gave thee jurisdiction of thy soul,
All thine immortal powers bring into play,
Think, act, strive, reason, then look up and pray."

E. W. Wilcox.

We must never grow weary. We may be sure that no sincere effort to free the soul from its defilement will go unrewarded by God, the Just One. We cannot too often remind ourselves that "Virtue is its own reward." It were reward enough when we realize what virtue of heart ultimately means for us. We had better frequently recall to our consciousness the thought contained in Tennyson's well-known lines,

"That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things."

Or, we rise to the higher life on the steps of our experiences, both of successes and of failures. Another poet cheers us on the way by singing to us thus:

"Count the milestones one by one?
No! no counting, only trusting
It is better farther on."

We rejoice to learn in the parable that the son went to his father in his unclean, hungry, and ragged condition, and that the father embraced him on his arrival before the son was cleansed, clothed, and fed. It was the returning in contrition of spirit that won the father's embrace. Doubtless cleansing preceded the putting on of the best robes, shoes, etc., as cleansing was an important ordinance for a Jew. He were yet an ungrateful renegade did he not conform to the usage. Then, after the robing came the feast, which further prepared him for reinstatement in his father's service. If we are a People Prepared for Him, we must use this same formula which was left us by our Saviour for our guidance in this preparation for His presence and service. It is just as needful for us to be reinstated, though we be sons, as it was for the son in the illustrative parable left us by our Lord.

Selfishness was the cause of this son's fall, and is the cause of all spiritual disease and disorganization of our physical, mental, or spiritual balance. That alone is what we must strive to eradicate. Our convictions and usages must pass under the cleansing, purifying fires of Christ's teaching and commands, for we learn that we shall be rejected if we do not obey these. Do we obey? If not,

are we not at present rejected? Are we intending quickly to arise and go to our Father for restoration? Were it not wiser to do so than to continue in this rejected condition? Surely many of us will thus strive to become a People Prepared for Him. Shall many of us be like those of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote thus?—

"And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of justice, and by the spirit of burning."

We must plainly see that obedience to His—shall we term it—cleansing ethics, a process of the purging out of the selfish taint in us, is the completion of our repentance, and the grounds of our continued sonship, our eternal life.

"These are they that came out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, or any heat; for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

In thus endeavouring to prepare ourselves as a people for His active service in connexion with His coming complete reign, the process seems to divide itself into two initial lines of preparation, and may be described as that of the Old Law and New Law. Without going into the old restrictive law of "Thou shalt not," and "Thou shalt," we shall take it as a disciplinary régime which was to bring the chosen people along until the time of John, who preached the law of repentance and forgiveness. He was followed by the Christ, who came bringing to this people, the Abundant Life. The restrictions were not withdrawn but were merged into the new régime. The Old Law seemed to be symbol of cleansing, the New Law of our being clothed upon by righteous deeds and partaking of the spiritual food of the teaching of Christ. This fits us for the more Abundant Life, the life hid in Christ. With the careful restrictions of purity, we must add the development in Christ of all our, now, almost dormant energies and talents. We have striven in the preceding pages to emphasize the need of our being cleansed as part of our preparation, but we find that this is largely a destructive process. We must destroy the selfish instinct that has developed so suicidally within us. In order to preserve ourselves we must destroy this tendency that is so horribly prolific in hate, greed and lust: we must crowd out of our mental attitude towards each other, hate, by overwhelming love

of the brotherhood of man in the individual and in the whole. We must replace greed, by a far-reaching kindness and a giving of our talents, time, and wealth in a glad offering to our brothers, striving to emulate our Lord Who gave His all for our redemption. We must temper all of our desires until they are no longer sinful lusts of the flesh; replacing sensual lust by holy affection; lust of power by, "In honour preferring one another," lust of fame by a humble and meek spirit which acknowledges all gifts as from God. In the New Law we are taught to fill ourselves so full of love, in its various phases, that it displaces and overcomes all tendencies of hate—that unholy brood of selfishness by which we are too much controlled. We shall do well to remember the parable of the man whose unclean spirit passed out of him and who, wandering about seeking rest and finding none, returned again to the man; and finding him swept and garnished he goeth and bringeth seven more spirits more evil than himself, and they entered into the man and the last state of this man was worse than the first. If we empty our lives, and sweep and garnish them and leave them empty, we make ourselves an abiding place of all evil. We must fill ourselves with the Holy Spirit, and there will be no room for the demons within us. This was where the Old Law failed. It swept clean with its restrictions, it was made splendid by its ritual; but it did not keep itself

occupied by love, kindness, and holy desires and aims, and humble joy by preferring one another. And so our Lord found these empty ritualists in a state which was worse than irreligious. His denunciation is without precedent as coming from his gracious Person.

"And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." "Ye offspring of viper, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye saw it, did not even repent yourselves afterwards, that ye might believe him." "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and standeth not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof."

It is clear enough from these few quotations of our Lord, that He found the leading Jewish religionists of His day pretty well occupied by the many demons of the parable. They had swept

and garnished, but had remained empty of good works. They made broad phylacteries and trimmed their garments more than ever—but they bound heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, on men's shoulders, and did not move a finger to help. They made long prayers, but devoured widows' houses. They compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, and then made him two-fold more the son of Gehenna than themselves. They tithed the mint, anise, and cummin but withheld justice, mercy, and faith. They had strained out the gnat, and swallowed the camel. These were indeed Blind Guides.

It would be well for our spiritual guides of to-day, to study carefully these seven pronouncements of Woe, and see if there be any of this Curse of Woe hanging over us as a religious people. We must be brought to remember that The Lord shall judge His people and that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God. We may have an idea of the methods of the coming examining judgment as we study the very awful accusations and denouncements by our Lord of our prototype, the Jew, as He found him in all his hollow zeal. We cannot differentiate between the various classes of religious persons to-day.

The Pharisees and Scribes seem to cover, in type, the two classes of religionists in Christendom to-day, which might be loosely described as, those who take part in active official religious service,

and those who make a study of doctrinal differences, criticisms, and all subjects which are in the domain of the scholarly theologian. Doubtless there were some excellent Jews who were Pharisees, we know of at least one. Doubtless there were some Scribes whose aims were higher than the mere sophistical quibbles of sectarian wrangling. That these two classes have their parallel with us to-day few will deny. That some of both of these classes are at least not quite empty of good occupants, that some are filled with helpful, loving service, we are glad to admit. We cannot differentiate between the private man in his pew, and the man who confesses to leadership by the occupation of the pulpit, or by use of the critical pen. All come unconsciously under either of the two types, or often, under both. We all of us love the performance of our pet ritual, even though it be a simple one; and also to struggle as learnedly as we may with the entangling and intricate minor doctrines. The one doctrine which should hold *eminent domain* in our Christian Church and all its schools and subschools is this reasonable question, "What does Jesus Christ teach us is the way to co-operate with Him in saving the people—ourselves included—from torture? No! from sinning?" A child can study this doctrine, and Himself told us that it was the gospel for the little children; as we are all obliged to become as they are, easily led, easily taught, obedient, trustful, affectionate, restful,

in the heart of the Father. We must allow this one doctrine to become our *dominant idea* that it may influence our every thought and the action that follows, or does not follow, the thought of a man. This will surely be the best robe for us to wear. We must admit that many men look very pretty and fine in what Dr. Pusey called "handsome dresses," but are these the garments that will assure him a welcome at the marriage feast of the Lamb? Scholarly (or otherwise) criticism is only expression of difference of opinion amongst men. These variants must always be in the minor doctrines. But, I truly believe that all true Christians (by faith) will agree with me, after a little consideration, that only the one question is of vital importance to one who claims to be a believer in the Christian religion, namely, "What does Jesus Christ teach us is the way to co-operate with Him in saving the people from their sins?" What else can possibly matter if we become a sinless people, as sinless as the little child of whom He said, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." So I feel sure that all those who are searching, like the valiant knights of old, for the "Holy Grail," will agree that this question alone is vital. And they will agree that the claim of this doctrine is well and solidly founded, which cannot be said of many minor ones. If, then, this is the vital question of belief, why do we not unite on this one point, and let each attend to his own minor matters? A

truly Christian Church should be liberal enough to cover all minor differences, so long as its members throw their life and soul into the mission of saving the people (themselves included) from their sins. I read in an excellent article in a current religious magazine this fine thought, "Dead things are uniform—where there is life there is variety. You may make machines all of one pattern, but not men. Skulls have more of a common likeness than souls. And so where life is, and especially Divine Life, there of necessity is diversity." Above, the writer had said, "A Church cannot be catholic and narrow. Neither can it be catholic and stationary." It would be well for many of us to think these lines over carefully, as there is much food for thought in them regarding bondage to our *fixed ideas*. As we have said, we should be very lenient with each other in these minor matters. Some one may say, But you are assuming the right to replace many doctrines by one which is the best in *your* judgment. My only answer is, Go to your Scriptures and search each one for himself. In this I do not feel guilty of presumption in quoting my Saviour for my vindication, "My teaching is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." We should remember that when the holy city is an accomplished reality, God says that, "They shall

teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

This would seem to forecast a time when right and holy thoughts have displaced the evil by which we are now far too completely occupied. If we have repented and have been cleansed, at least in part, from our defilement of evil thoughts and habits, and have put on the robe of righteousness and good determination in service for the race, then will come our feast of good things. This the pitiful Father offers us very fully in His Written Word, the Holy Scriptures; and in the Incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. All Scripture points to the Redeemer of men's souls. He claimed to be the Bread of Life and the Water of Life. This food will ensure us of a useful earth life, and an immortal future.

I firmly believe that the future life is also to be a useful one. Between the lines, we may find suggested by the Scripture a state of great activity amongst the angels, spirits of the prophets, and the spirits of just men made perfect. In this I do rejoice, for who shall say but that we may be allowed the wonderful privilege of doing in another world that which we were quite unable to accomplish in this. I cannot see this to be a wholly visionary hope, for how shall we grow from perfection unto perfection without some useful, unselfish

avenue for cultivating and exercising our spiritual energies? God does all the work of the Universe. Christ does all the work that is required to fill His mission, define it as you will. The Holy Spirit we must consider as the obedient Executive of God, under Christ. Surely, we read much of the *work* of the Holy Spirit. If we are in union with this Trinity in One, shall we not gladly work also? I pray my merciful Father that the circumstance of physical death shall not end, but begin, what service is within my small gifts to perform. A heaven with no hope of happy useful occupation is an inconceivable proposition to me. As a small child I dreaded this inactive sort of joy (?), that I was led to presume was the state of the blest. Why should we be obliged to have such strange experiences in this kindergarten world if it were not to prepare us as a people for Him to do His higher service? Sometimes as one's imagination reaches far out beyond all present place, condition, and time, into a field of hope that has been kindled at the sacred fires of Scripture and the soul's instinctive desires, one feels a great longing to go home. Home, where the school may be a little less trying, where the efforts may be a little less futile, where one may be encouraged a little by the helpful smile of approval. Where the weakness and pain of the physical body do not hamper and limit and discourage us so sadly. But we must be brave.

If we do not take our mind, memory, culture,

character, etc., into another life with us, just what is it that we do take? Will some kind theologian or scientist tell us this? What could accompany the spirit, the soul, but these qualities? What would be the state of an ego deprived of these? True, miracles of conversion do take place in this life, in what seems to be a moment, and may not the same thing occur at the moment of dissolution, as in the dying thief? But Christ invited this repentant one to come with him to hear the preaching of the word, that doubtless was to change his *character*. I think that this is a well-founded assumption, as we have previously noted. But, when we know for certainty that if we are to live eternally we must change from our old selves to a higher, purer creature in Christ Jesus, why do we not see it that we must begin earnestly and immediately to turn from our old evil characteristics and become likeminded unto our Saviour? Paul tells the Philippians (and tells us too, or our Scriptures are void),

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the Cross. . . . So then my beloved . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God

who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and questioning; that ye may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.

The more we examine the Word of God written down for us by the prophets, and later by the Apostles, the more shall we find that this Christ-like humility, this emptying of one's self of self to be filled with Him, is the one absolutely imperative duty or office for a soul who is intent on entering on the sacrificial service of the Messiah. How shall we feast on Him if we be the hold of demons, unclean spirits, and every unclean and hateful bird? If we be cleansed, but empty, how quickly should we invite the Holy Presence to take possession of us lest this dread thing should happen and that we should have to consent to this horrid occupation of creatures, who are by far worse than our own first selves. We have, in youth, been frightened miserably by lurid visions of a yawning place of torment, ever burning, ever awaiting, ever hungry for more victims to fill its Molech-like abyss. While we are as yet "mere animals" perhaps it is as well to frighten us with visions of threatening physical pain. When we become reborn into immortality we feel that we know that it is torment beyond all physical torment, to be

refilled by a satanic legion of spirits. I feel convinced that in all God's glorious universe you shall not find a reason for believing that a soul can be filled with that peace of God which passeth all understanding, while as yet he is filled with all sorts of defiling desires, aims, and selfish instincts, whether in this world or the other.

If we are to be a temple of God we must become a people prepared for Him. We must repent of our sinning. We must be cleansed from our habits of evil, hate, greed, and lustful desires. We must be clothed upon by love, kindness, and holy aims and desires. We must feed upon the Bread of Life as we find it in our Lord. We must be nourished and strengthened by the glorious promises of our Creator as given to us all along since Adam's day, until the Redeemer's final victory over our sins. We must give our service as empty vessels for the Master's use complete. To rise to the stature of Sons of God, joint heirs with our Elder Brother, is an honour which all true souls must desire, be they great in this world, or small. The attaining to this sonship is the result of holiness in desire and life. Thus each citizen of our Empire may aspire to it, not by the wealth of Mammon, nor by ancient earthly succession, nor by some one great deed which may have pleased a passing sovereign; but by the riches of a graceful, loving spirit, by rebirth into the immortal life, and by an earth life whose every deed is

pleasing to our Abiding Sovereign King, whose home is in heaven. We do not have to go to Him, for if we invite Him He will come in and sup with us, and we shall be in heaven indeed, while still in our preparatory stage of life. If we did but realize this, I feel that we would use every obtainable effort of our souls, all our volition of determinate attaining, in order to fit ourselves for our illustrious guests.

"Abide with me, fast falls the eventide,
The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless,
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? Where grave thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me."

H. F. Lyte.

CHAPTER VIII

"I WILL COUNSEL THEE WITH MINE EYE UPON THEE"

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in. . . . But he that trusteth in Jehovah, loving kindness shall compass him about." PSALM xxxii. 8, 9, 10.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 COR. xv. 58.

"The work is thine, not mine, O Lord!
It is Thy race we run;
Give light, and then shall all I do
Be well and truly done."

H. BONAR.

WHEN we realize that we are in a measure a people prepared for Him by repentance and cleansing, and by being clothed upon with holy desires, we shall not only be fit for, at least, small work, but we shall be filled with joy in being able to do that which we find ourselves called upon to do. We begin the Abundant Life. This is partaking of the living spirit of the living Christ. We shall enter into His spirit of self-renunciation

and love for the children of men. We shall know that He is not now so much a crucified Jesus of Nazareth, as He is a risen Christ, Son of the Blessed One; that He not only came, but is come, here and now; that He is controlling all our proceedings and is an actual Presence; that the Spirit of Truth is bringing to our minds the things which Jesus taught and which we too largely ignore; that this Holy Executive is with us always, and is ever ready and desirous to give us the help and counsel (under Christ) that we require. This everyday, every-moment living in the conscious presence of the spiritual world, this "cloud of witnesses," when combined with constant prayer to the Father for the aid that He alone can send us, will give us a sense of calm security that the world, the flesh, and Satan himself cannot overthrow. To incorporate all this into our consciousness as an absolute verity is the necessary complement of our intellectual preparation. The mental training, though important at this age, is much less so than this other training of the consciousness of the soul. The latter is the Abundant Life indeed. Abundant, because it is only limited by God's will concerning our labour for Him.

If He wishes us to do this small act, we shall do it gladly, as a little child. If He bid us do some more momentous act, we shall rise to the occasion with fortitude, and with a courage, born not of our own might, but of knowing that as our days are so

shall our strength be, for God hath declared it. It is He "Who rideth upon the heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the skies. The eternal God is thy dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms." The wise man had observed that "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." If we interpret *chance* as meaning the *providential will of God concerning us*, the passage gives a realistic idea of the foolishness of thinking that we *cannot do* that which in our inner consciousness we feel *called upon to do*. Though we be slow and weak, lacking in wealth, unfavoured by men, still God can use us if He needs us. We have the notable examples of Moses and Paul, which should prove to us that *obedience is wisdom*. These men had the qualities which God required them to use for His service. He supplied that which they lacked. But had they refused the *call*, our religious history would be without two of its most important figures. Sometimes an important message can be carried by a child, but the child must be obedient to his instructions. If our life is consecrated to God and is hidden in Christ, no power on earth, or in the realms of evil, can hasten or hinder, mar or make, our service towards the race.

Jesus discovered that obedience to the will of

the Father gave Him full authority over all things, both in heaven and on earth. Certainly, because His will and His Father's were one. "Both wills were in one stature." His life was hidden in God. He was the first fruits and drew His life and will from the Father. We must draw our life and will from God through Him. It is of no use appealing to the Father ignoring the Son, for He spoke to us the words of explanatory command, thus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." God will not speak to us, other than in wrath, if we thus insult His Son. For, if we thus sin *after we are instructed* as to the office of our Redeemer we are subject to "A certain fearful expectation of judgment."

"A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

The old law punished wilful insult to the law of Moses by death. The new law teaches that the death of the soul is the result of wilfully resisting the authority and commands of the Lord Christ, our Leader into our spiritual Canaan.

Obedience to the written word, as it bears on the

cultivated consciousness, will be followed and supplemented by direction in all our activities. We shall be ministered to when in our weakness and ignorance we seem to come short of ability to perform. The sure knowledge that we have the hosts of heaven, under Christ, to uphold us in any righteous service that we are really called upon to do, is surely sufficient to give us that stability of purpose that is essential to the accomplishment of all real work. I think that this is the secret of the stedfastness of the martyrs. They believed that Christ was a reality. It was infinitely wiser to be true to Him, and their own ultimate welfare, than to enjoy the approval of the wicked for a season. They believed that it did not profit a man to gain the whole world if thereby he lost his soul's life eternally. Have we this stedfastness of the saints? If we have not, it is because we do not believe—or perhaps realize—that we are under the instructing and counselling eye of the Father. And so we act as though we had no understanding, and have to be hampered by the bit and bridle of human laws. We try to obey human-made laws because the shadow of the prison is ever threatening us. We do not expect even our most pious friends to obey the decalogue entirely. Such a man would stand out in relief amongst us like a lone tree in a pastureland, noticeable from all directions. If a man obeyed the laws of the Son of the Blessed One absolutely, we

would either worship him, or slay him. And yet we are each absolutely commanded thus to do.

An intelligent study of the Inspired Scriptures, as it bears on our revolting conditions to-day, will make us see clearly that sin is the disease of the mind which brings ultimate death to the soul; and that sin towards God is identical with sin towards the children of the race. This should urge us on to sane, but energetic action. We know, by the Inspired Word, that if we sincerely endeavour to do Christ's work we shall be assisted and upheld by His Executive. This should give us the desirable stedfastness, or patience, which the saints possessed. We shall never feel alone and helpless. We shall always feel secure as long as we are obedient.

"A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and and a covert from the tempest, as streams of water in a dry place, as the shade of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be closed, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. . . . But the noble deviseth noble things; and in noble things shall he continue." "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

It would seem from much that might be quoted that we are, as a fact, under the government of Christ, or we are not. If we are acting under His governmental authority, we know that

we shall be under the especial care and guidance of His Executive; as are all those who, being filled with the Holy Spirit, do His bidding gladly, and are employed in His service of redeeming the children of the race from their miserable state of body, mind, and spirit. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" This should give us serious thought. It must mean that if we give up our souls to Christ's keeping, and consecrate our services to His employment, we shall thus have the promised ministration of angels to guide, guard, and to assist us in our obedient endeavour. This belief is not borrowed from modern spiritism, but from the Lord Christ's Testament as it is given to us. Some of us are as conscious of the ministry of Angels from personal experience as we are of the kindly consideration of our, as yet, human friends.

"Ever so low, ever so gently,
Whisper the angels in mine ear,
Teaching me still, chiding me never—
Heaven itself is brought more near!"

If we are walking with earthly companions we try to understand what they are saying to us, but we walk day by day in the presence of these messengers of Christ, and who shall say but at times in His Own company, and perhaps never turn our inner hearing towards them to catch the guiding

and cheering word. Oh, how kindly and stedfast these must be in their endeavour towards us, to bear our cold indifference thus! The patience of the saints is a beautiful quality for us to try to incorporate into our own consciousness, for we shall doubtless require its cultivation, even in the small tasks which we may be called upon to perform. We shall doubtless have much cold indifference shown towards us in our most trying tasks, sometimes by those who should give us the widest sympathy, but who disappoint us most cruelly. We must learn to say with our Saviour, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." "And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds between thine arms? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." The *nominal Church* has ever been busy wounding those who are in the *true Church*, those who are consecrated to Christ's true service. And still they spare not. The modern method is less brutal but quite as effective in its hurting power. These we must not copy in *our* methods. We had better, for our work's sake, and for our soul's serenity, rather copy the Saviour of men, and His patient helpful assistants. When we recollect what some brave-spirited men and women have done under the direction of the Spirit, through prayer to and trust in God the Father, we must be ashamed of our reluctance to acquire these gifts. We could enumerate several

of recent years who openly claim to carry on their splendid work by faith in the efficacy of trustful prayer. Many souls of lesser experiences can testify to the obtaining of implicit direction *when earnestly* desired and required. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Our Lord said to His disciples, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." John, who perhaps entered into the spirit of the Master's teaching more truly than did any of the other Apostles, writes thus, "And this is the boldness which we have towards him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him." But this was written by a disciple who was a *doer* as well as a *believer*, one who *would obey* though he knew that it might lead him into the valley of the shadow of death; one who was in such close touch with Jesus as to be, we may suppose, His dearest earthly friend. John took the ground that a true disciple's desire was in harmony with his beloved Master, and with the intention of the Father; therefore he could come with boldness. If we are in harmony with the Father and His One Son, and desire and pray for that which they are intending to do for us, we

shall obtain our requirement. If this is true, we may well inquire, Then why petition if it is our destiny to do or have so-and-so without our asking? Since we are constantly urged to pray, to ask and receive, knock that it may be opened, we must regard this trustful and harmonious asking as a necessary obedience that shall ensure direction. *It is an implicit command which we may not ignore. It is the commonest of everyday courtesy to acknowledge a friend's presence.* If we are in the presence of one whom we think of as being a social superior we are all courtesy and attention. But the patient Son of the Blessed One may stand at the door and knock throughout the long years, and we heed Him not, nor invite Him in. He sends His blessed messengers to us, and we accept their aid, most of us unconsciously, and without a thankful heart, or inner word of appreciation to them. Some of us accept of these kindly gifts of strength and skill, and think that we have performed wonderful things by our own strength and cleverness, and that we are certainly great persons. Most of us, like those referred to in our text, are without understanding, and when God wants to use us, He puts on the bit and bridle, as one must to the horse and mule, and as we cannot see our driver, we think that we are wise and powerful to perform in our own might and wisdom. And we might be walking in the Christlike confidence of doing the will of the Father, knowing that He is instructing

and counselling us with His eye upon us, and that we are trusting in the help of Jehovah, and always encompassed by the loving-kindness of our Father who is in heaven! Oh, if we were not so dense, so deaf, so dumb, so blind! If we are in great straits many of us are ready enough to cry out in terror to God to help us, like the cowards that we are; but to recognize and acknowledge His constant precious protecting and preserving presence, does not often come into our conscious minds. True, on a Sunday, some of us do glibly repeat all the beautiful and holy prayers that should be the life-blood of our souls, but which have become, through the constant saying of them, little more than a habit of the mouth. If we were only true to ourselves! If we only *realized* that, which after all is said, many of us do absolutely believe in, what a people we should become!

If we lived as in the conscious, realized, actual presence of the Father, His One Perfected Son and those holy ones who are filled with the Spirit of God, what a redeeming strength we should be in the world, at this most trying time! A time when every system or school seems to be passing through the fires of purification for the coming Kingdom of Heaven! Perhaps not many of us would care to realize that we are in the constant presence of these august Guests. Human beings have realized it, and why not we? Enoch "walked with God," it is said. We know that he also "talked with

God," fragments of the conversation having been handed down to us. Abraham was called "The friend of God." We know that he also talked with God, as the Scriptures do testify. Moses talked with God, and received from Him his mission and The Law. Paul and John talked with the Christ long after He had become King of Heaven and earth, and when He was sitting on the right hand of God—or in His full authority. If we wish to be strong, stedfast, stable, wise, and invincible, as these great souls—though in a lesser vocation—we must unite ourselves to the government of this Kingly Christ. We must in all solemnity covenant with Him that we will give allegiance to Him and Him only. We must then ask guidance and strength from the Father in the name of His Son. We must attune our inner consciousness to catch the breathings of the Spirit of God. We must learn to ask and to expect this constant inspiration every moment of our lives.

We have five natural senses. We also have a largely latent sixth. The sixth sense makes us aware of the mental forces and atmosphere by which we are environed, and with which we come in contact. But our seventh, and complete sense, is that which brings us into communion and unity with the spiritual government of Christ. If we attain to the revived use of this almost latent sense, then we shall ask and receive because we shall always ask aright. We shall not be mere

servants of Christ and His working force, but we shall be *friends*. Jesus said to His Own,

"Abide in me, and I in you. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples. . . . Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you. No longer do I call you servants; . . . for all things that I heard from my Father I have made known unto you. . . . I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth; for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak; and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come."

Again He entreats our courteous friendship, this time from out His throne on the right hand of God,

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with me in my throne, as I also overcame and sat down with my Father in his throne."

We might well wonder why Christ Jesus was so severe in His condemnation of the speaking against the Holy Spirit, unless we pause to consider the office of this third person of that which we know as

the Triune Godhead. This consideration explains it fully. Jesus in His human person had been subjected to severe discipline and trial by His Father, in order that He might be perfected, or tested, by the things which He suffered, that we might have a high priest that could feel our infirmities and so be in a position to sympathize with us in our difficulties, and strengthen and support us in our weakness. He knew that it was the Holy Spirit Who had ministered to Him in His greatest trials. He also knew that all who would reach the spiritual condition that is essential to soul-life, must be assisted by this same Holy Spirit. Therefore, it was worse than folly, it was soul-suicide, to speak against (or blaspheme) this one official *first aid* of the mortal soul. Afterwards, He was to take on the full authority over this executive body, this Holy Spirit endowed Executive, but they would always be, and now are, the direct personal aid of the mortal soul who is striving after this wondrous privilege, *immortality*. And this sin is quite as heinous and suicidal to-day as it was when Jesus pronounced it as so absolutely unforgivable. Perhaps it is more so. We may read His written word, but He promised to send the Spirit of Truth to tell us more fully about things which these contemporaries could not bear to know. Paul spoke of things that he had learned, that these peoples were not able to bear to know. What are these things which the Spirit of Truth

was to tell later on to a people that were better prepared for it? Perhaps it was some things which suited our age but not theirs. Why do we not try to obtain this fulness of Truth? Do we not desire it? Do we not believe that what Jesus promised us is a verity, or have we overlooked the fact that He did promise it? What is the trouble with us? Do we really desire direction with God's eye upon us? Or do we prefer to go blundering along with our eyes fixed on nowhere, our feet wandering about as though separated from our brain, grasping at all sorts of débris and phantoms, and so prove to the watching host that we are still mortal, and still wish to remain mortal, and so thus slowly pass away into chaotic dissolution? Or does that *Something within us that feels out after life eternal for the soul* compel us to look into this matter and try to learn just what our privileges and possibilities are? There is, after repentance, no other more important point in our life of faith than *guidance*. So we find that Jesus emphasized it next to repentance. He constantly taught repentance, and said that there had been none greater than he who taught the new doctrine of, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." So repentance comes first, as we have endeavoured to explain, then come forgiveness, cleansing, and robing in the garments of good desires and intentions in our works, etc. Then we shall strive to acquire intellectual and spiritual food to give us

enough vigour to desire to do that which is just and right. But, if after arriving at this status of spiritual life, by the aid of the Spirit, we then refuse to ask God for this further direction and instruction, we shall still fail in our effort, for it will be poor and abortive. We shall not bear finely developed fruit, but only that which falls to the ground. All effort to be fruitful in good works for the children of men, must be under the direct control of Christ and His Executive. Therefore, if we refuse, or worse, speak against this body, how shall we be helped? This is God's gift of help to us, we require it, we cannot live for long without it. God told us once that the Spirit should not always abide with us, or strive with us. We are warned not to quench the Spirit, not to despise prophesyings, but to prove all things, hold fast that which is good.

Paul here warns the Thessalonians against repelling the Spirit, and at the same time warns them to be careful not to be misled by false teachings—perhaps teaching given through supernatural agencies, or agencies claiming to be such. John also warns us against this danger. The warning is as timely to-day as it was then, perhaps more so, since the wave of belief in the possibility of communion with spirit intelligences has of late years swept over us like an east wind. It is only fair, and even necessary, to refer here to this movement with as little prejudice as we may. Personally, we owe too much to our investigation

of it to speak of it in a wholly disparaging tone. John is quite explicit in his instructions as to the mode of distinguishing between the agencies of Satan and that of the Holy Spirit, the Executive of the Lord Christ, thus:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not (or annulleth) Jesus is not of God; and this is the spirit of the anti-Christ, whereof ye have heard that it cometh; and now it is in the world already."

You will find that, with a few exceptions, the teaching that emanates from popular Spiritism, is, to use the greatest reserve in describing it, Unitarian in character, no matter how generally moral in tone. Many of those who have had plenty of experience in making sure for themselves that the possibility of communion is a verity are amongst our highest thinkers. This we all know without mentioning them by name. But these do not study it as a *religion*, but as a possible scientific discovery, comparing well with telepathy and kindred discoveries. The day has passed when we may sneer at the possibilities of being able to interchange communication with intelligences which are not of our density of physical matter. It

never was scriptural to deny it. We should all be grateful to those who have tried to gain experience in this matter when it is done either in a religious or a scientific spirit. Religious, in trying to save the people from error, and scientific as trying to bring to the subject the best human light that can be focussed upon it. Where the error has lain with our Christian believers of all persuasions, is in that they have not used the test as given by John.

In looking into this and many other modern movements, one may see a peculiar and exceedingly significant method which, it seems to us, the Lord Christ is using. We must grant that His Kingdom is being ushered in. We shall be obliged to grant also that Satan's kingdom of this world is in the last stages, and is surely leaving his grasp. The spirit of anti-Christ was to be, and who would deny that it has been in the world to this day, and now is still in it? It seems to be the privilege of this opposing spirit, this anti-Christ, to try and overthrow Christ's Kingdom by various subtle methods. We may easily observe that each of these great movements has been, and is, denying to Christ Jesus His present living authority, as an actual, personal King over Heaven and earth. And yet, each cultus is heavy with at least one truth, which is in an inconceivable degree ignored in our popular Christianity. So we see it to be the will of God that these (maybe, unclean frogs, of the vision

of St. John) are in the end to be directed to the office of reminding Christianity into what puniness and inadequacy she has fallen. The early Church healed the sick; we do not. Christian Science denies the present authority of Christ as King; but she most certainly heals many of the diseases to which we are heirs. This we cannot deny if we wish to. The early Church had all things in common, and none were in need. And they were a prosperous people. Socialism designs to have this carried out in our midst; but a strongly active Socialist is seldom, if ever, found to be one willing to give Christ Jesus His absolute position without veering dangerously near to Unitarianism.

In reading the New Testament, who shall doubt, if he read intelligently, that these so-called spiritual gifts belonged as part and parcel to the Church of Christ, then and always? Who shall deny that there is a renewing of these gifts prophesied by it? There was great activity between the primitive Church of Christ and His Executive. From the beginning of Matthew's account until we reach the end of the Revelation of John, we are before constant evidence of this close, conscious relationship between the risen Christ and His Church. And it is accentuated by His promise, "And lo, I am with you all the days (always), even unto the end of the world (or the consummation of the age)." So the communion of the Lord Christ and His ministering

spirits, whom He sends for our assistance, is no fairy tale; but it is our privilege and right to have them, and we do have them; but we are wofully guilty of ignoring their constant and conscious direction in our efforts. This is to our grave hurt. When Jesus sent forth the twelve disciples to preach the Kingdom, He gave them power to cast out demons, to heal all manner of disease; and they were not allowed to provide for their sustenance in advance, but were to accept of hospitality from those to whom they ministered. If they were brought before councils, etc., they were not to consider what they had better say. They were told, "Be not anxious how or what ye shall speak . . . for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

If we are to know of His will concerning us how shall we learn it if not by what He taught to His disciples? If we were intended to have something quite different, what was it to be, and where is it so stated in His Testament? If this and other commands and assurances are for us, why do we fling them from us as though they were deadly injury or peril? Why do we not wish our dormant senses to become active? Why do we piously repeat, "I believe in the communion of saints," and refuse to realize that this is an actual possibility? I do not deny that many earnest souls ask imploringly of God to guide them in their general life, and in particular duties and undertakings.

I know that many, perhaps all, who feel themselves to be Christians, do this. Some, whom we deem to be far from being Christians, cry to their God for help in that which they feel to be their duty to perform. It is said that Madame Roland was sometimes called an atheist, but she had one prayer to which she claimed always to confine herself, viz.: "O Thou Who hast placed me on the earth, enable me to fulfil my destination in the manner most conformable to the Divine Will, and most beneficial to my fellow creatures." Madame Roland did not hear the "voices," as did Joan of Arc, but who shall say that her prayer was not answered? Perhaps all who pray ask for direction, but do all expect to receive, and are all willing to act upon the advice received, or felt to be received?

As the theme of this chapter is *direction from God*, I felt called upon to dwell at considerable length on this question of communion with spirit intelligences, the more so since we know that so very many persons are to-day asking direction of those whom they term to be their "guides." This is more often done than would be imagined possible by those who cannot be brought to believe that it is other than fanciful nonsense. Those who fear that it may be true are, many of them, of opinion that it is, without exception, from Satan's agents. On either class I do most emphatically and beseechingly urge the bringing of into absolutely constant use the *trial test of the Apostle John* which

has been previously quoted, "Beloved, believe not," etc. Right at this point is the danger. None of us fear ministering spirits of God, unless we are secretly sinning. We all of us do fear mocking demons, who tempt and torment us. So we had better arm ourselves with this unfailing defence. But to refuse the *conscious* companionship of the Angels of God is inconceivable folly in a soul who is looking ever upward towards our eternal home, the home of the Blessed One and this company of ministering spirits. The time of our ignorance God will overlook, but after we know and are brought into remembrance of our Lord's warning by the Spirit of Truth, how shall we with impunity continue to ignore our Lord's messengers to us? Any human soul who has had the wonderful experience of being brought into the consciousness of having the constant, and shall we term it, palpable, presence of these messengers, ministering spirits, throughout the intricacies of a life which seems partly failure, partly success, is so filled with an inexpressible gratitude and tenderness towards them as spiritual entities, that it becomes no longer possible to ignore them. But, if they be truly Christ's messengers, they will not put their personalities into prominence. They will refuse to *guide* or give us instruction if we ask *them* to do so. *They will compel us to ask God, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for what we want; and not themselves, in their own persons.*

And we see it to be scripturally wrong to ask those spirits who are around us for information on any subject, unless we first ask permission of God in Christ Jesus' name. He in no place in the Word invites or commands us to ask of these messengers, or gives us promises that we shall thus receive. Into this dangerous abyss many well meaning people have fallen of late years. It is not that we may not love *impersonally* those who minister to us so tenderly, but that we must recognize that all good and perfect gifts come from God alone, and we must ask all of Him in Christ's name. Christ will send whom He will, and answer us in the way that is best for us.

One day I read this little thought in a journalistic article, viz.: That to see a danger clearly one's self was to receive a call to reveal that danger to others. I feel this to be an urgent truth. The small boy saw the tiny leak in the great dyke which held back the relentless sea from flowing over a town in Holland. He stayed at the danger point until a greater than he undertook the task and the mending of the leak. It was the boy's call from the God of Lives to stop the leak. And in this same spirit of obedience to the God of Lives do we earnestly desire to call attention to this twofold danger that to-day menaces the spiritual lives of our people.

If any of us have this aroused sense of being conscious of entities who are of a rarer quality, less

dense, in body than we are; if we find that these are in the slightest degree endeavouring to undermine in us the purity and absoluteness of our faith in a consecrated, crucified, risen, and now reigning Jesus the Christ, Who saves us from our sins and death; then we should know that such are Satan's agents, and are not of Christ's Holy Executive. We are told that if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into a pit. The difference in the guidance between these two forces is precisely the difference which lies between Pentecost and Inferno. It is our free will right to take our places in either company, as we choose, but not in both. "Ye cannot serve two masters."

And so we repeat the Apostle's warning, "Quench not the Spirit." It is through the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, that we obtain counsel and instruction. This is, as I see it, the most emphatically taught of all the essential doctrines in the Old or New Testament. Its lucidity is evidence of its essential importance. Christ's uncompromising denouncement of those who spoke against it, seals it beyond doubt.

We need be in no doubt but that the school of the prophets had some such test whilst in training; as the difference between the witches and prophets was as marked as is the difference between a Christian prophet and a fortune-teller, to-day. Oh, for a renewal of the school of the prophets in our midst! God has not forgotten His promises.

Christ His Son has not withdrawn His blessed assurances to us. There has always been this gift awaiting our acceptance. In the days of Eli, who had wicked sons, "The Word of Jehovah was rare (or precious) in those days; there was no frequent (or widely spread) vision." The wise man tells us that "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint." If we have no vision to-day, why have we not? If some of us have a measure of it, why do we not confess it, that our experiences may be helpful? Were the heathen "Wise-ones" ashamed to consult their oracles? Are we sure that the usefulness of these famous oracles of ancient lore was an absolute fiction, born of a fanciful imagination? We cannot be sure of anything regarding these; but we do know that Jehovah told Moses to put into Aaron's breastplate of Judgment the Urim and the Thummim, that they might be upon Aaron's heart when he went in before Jehovah; and on his forehead were written the words, Holy to Jehovah. We learn that these two words mean Light and Perfection. We are not sure that these objects actually responded to questions, but we do know that God answered Aaron's questions in some way when he wore them. Was it a symbol, as all other things were in Jewish ritual? Does it mean that if we go into the presence of God—in retreat if you will—with the Light of the Spirit of Truth and the Perfection of Obedience in our hearts as chiefest

qualities in our breastplate, and if we be also Holy to Jehovah; that the Lord Christ, God's Voice, will speak to us on important issues, as did Jehovah God to these children of old? These were the forerunners of the school of the prophets. Shall we yet have a Christ-ruled School of the Prophets? Why should we not learn to discriminate between the tempter of men's souls, and the Saviour of them? Have we a clear duty along this theme?

If we ask aright we receive. If we knock aright it shall be opened to us. If we are in harmony with the Heavenly Kingdom, we shall seek direction, and shall receive it in some way that is best for us, or is easiest for us to follow. For Christ has asked us to walk with Him, and take His yoke upon us. If we are obedient to His instructions and counsels, we shall be His friends, and not merely His servants. This will give us assurance that we shall not, at least ultimately, fail in any heaven-born undertaking. We shall be "stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the works of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord." Alas, that we still cry with the troubled spirit of Job,

"O that I knew where I might find Him!
That I might come even to His seat!
I would set my cause in order before Him
And fill my mouth with arguments.
I would know the words which He would answer me.
. . . . . .

Behold, I go forward, but He is not there;
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;
On the left hand, when He doeth work, but I cannot behold
Him;
He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him."

Job xxiii. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9.

CHAPTER IX

"THE URIM AND THE THUMMIM"

"And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before Jehovah; and Aaron shall hear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before Jehovah continually."
EXODUS xxviii. 30.

"If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; if any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth." 1 PETER iv. 11.

"Wherefore O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance." ACTS xxvi. 19, 20.

CAN we put on our breastplate a motto that is richer in significance than the Urim and the Thummim, the Light and Perfection, when we enter into the holy place, and stand awaiting the instructions and counsels of the One who was the Light of the World, who was the One Perfected Author of our Salvation? After repentance, and preparation for service is attained, can we find any further essentials that are not covered by the motto, Light and Perfection? Light, to know just

what we should do in our efforts to restore the fallen race—ourselves included—and the Perfection of mind and conduct, which is the result of obedience to that Light. Light without obedience is worse than wasted. To know and not to do, is open wickedness. To do active service without the enlightenment of wise counsel, is almost useless effort. In our motto, Light comes first, Perfection next in position; just as obedience must necessarily follow, and not precede command.

And so we have been urging the study of all history of mankind, but especially the Scriptures, that we may have some light on our history as a race of *mortal* souls. In studying our Scriptures thus, we find that we as souls may under certain conditions become *immortal*. We are taught these conditions in the history and teachings of our Lord Christ. We know that He came on earth, lived, died, rose again, ascended to the right hand of the Father, in order that we might be brought into union with the Father, through Himself, and that thus we may become immortal. God had long before said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." His Son came claiming to save the people from this habit of sinning which has held us as a race in the bonds of mortality. He brought us the Light and has promised that we shall yet attain unto Perfection, even as He has; but it is by the path of absolute obedience to the Light. This is our key

to the Kingdom. If any man tries to attain eternal life by other means he must fail.

We read much of *salvation* in the New Testament. Do we always consider that the meaning of the word *salvation* is not only to be *saved, but to be saved because we are sound*, that is, not in a decaying condition? We are taught by our Lord that the way to keep in this sound condition is to bear one another's burdens, and to love one another. This is the scriptural process by which we become whole enough to continue to live. This obedient and wise service is our natural mode of soul exercise which shall eventually give us Christlike powers and Christlike soundness which shall be our salvation from death. Then shall we joyfully cry, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" We shall know that "the sting of death is sin," and that thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ we have victory over death.

We believe in Christ; so do the demons. It is by our obedience in conduct, and allegiance in spirit, that we are distinguished from these unhappy intelligences who "shudder," in the knowledge that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Christ of God. So we must show forth our faith by our loving service in the redemptive work of this Christ, to Whom we owe our loving loyalty. If we do not, He will not acknowledge us before His Father. How could He? As, if we are not obedient, then we are certainly disobedient. If we do not know

what we ought to do, we should read the descriptions of the Kingdom of Heaven, to which we are heirs, and see how it compares with what we allow to exist in our midst to-day. We may receive a little light in this way; and after becoming quite obedient to this light regarding bearing one another's burdens, and doing to others as we would that they should do to us, we shall no doubt have our illumination increased. Light does not guide the steps of a blind man. If we are blind to our individual responsibilities, the illuminative effect of what we know is wasted on us. A little light, and a perfect obedience, is better than much light, and a mean-spirited, grudging, and disloyal disobedience. Obedience is the highway to perfection. So we shall have on our breastplate both words, "The Light and the Perfection." Of what use is it to ask for direction if we have not obeyed the instructions that we have already received? Thus, we are not in a state, except at crucial moments, to secure guarantee of an answer to our petition for guidance, because we are so unkind towards one another. If we had done all that we possibly could for each other, we could go before Jehovah and ask, with faith that we should receive. This is where the trouble lies. Christ left us a code of such chaste ethics; and we still live in such a state, that we may well not wish to realize that He and His angels surround us! But, with joy we do see very many strongly courageous souls

making desperate efforts to remedy some of the evils of the day. All cannot be effected at once, but it must be done swiftly. Each one of us can perform some small office for the general good, and as our obedience strengthens, so shall we have light to walk. So, while we study the ethics of Christ's Kingdom, and covenant our allegiance to His commands, and listen to His voice only, we shall begin to look about us, and into our individual and daily lives, and we shall at first try loyally to do that which is just and right, in small ways and in seeming trifles. The habit of this holy effort will grow upon us, and we shall be seeking for special direction in our daily walk of life. This, in itself, we shall find to be a most searching and disciplining exercise. Just think for a moment, if this exercise were to become universal for a few years in our Empire, what it would mean. But alas, while we are looking, by a long stretch of the *imagination*, into such a state as this office performed would bring us to in a few years, the picture is left in distressingly distinct relief of how we are situated at present *in reality*. Recent events have revealed a vista of oppression, misery and dishonesty, that should spur on every sincere soul to do, at the very least, the duty that lies nearest him. Even this small-sounding beginning would indeed be vast in its issues. We know that in the Holy City there will be no hunger, or sickness, or pain, or lies. A child knows when

another child is hungry, or ill, or suffering pain. A child if he be a normal, innocent, unspoilt child, will always sympathize with a sufferer, and give a hungry little one a piece of his food. Alas, we are not so good as these little ones, of whom we have so much to learn. Alas, that the child should have to unlearn so much of its divine instinctive knowledge. Oh, that we could leave unspoiled this God-given instinct in these simple minds! But, coming into contact with the selfishness and dishonesty of the maturer general world, the child soon becomes hardened and blinded to pain, and becomes filled with the depraved and dishonest idea that he must get and hold all that he can for his own use. This instinct is accountable for the crafty dishonesty that utterly permeates the general commerce of our Christian (?) nations. And what a weary business it is to unlearn it in our still maturer years, after long seasons of this hardening process! Alas, some of us do not unlearn it in this life at all! We go into, maybe, an honoured grave, with this suicidal instinct wrapped closely about us as a winding sheet of the soul—which indeed it is—but when we arrive in that other world, that next state of being, with whom shall we associate? To whom shall we find our instincts and habits allied?

I think that almost all thinking persons of fair mind will agree with me that given the right mode of life, conditions, environments, etc., all souls

desire purity of life, and instinctively feel that it is the only way in which one may arrive at the much to be desired status, Immortality. Why then do we not walk therein? We have the reason stated plainly enough in the list of debarring qualities spoken of in Revelation. But first, we must identify the Kingdom of God with the Home of Immortal Souls. Christ taught us that the Kingdom of Heaven is within us. We cannot bring into this *heaven within* many of the qualities of which we are now in possession. The first named one seems to be the chief drawback to the attainment of this *heaven within.* We are all too *fearful* of everything that is in our way, and we allow our want of courage to stand in the way of our obedience. So we become hearers and not doers. Granted that a soul perceives a line of service most clearly, and knows that he has been given the talent required to perform it, why does he not proceed to do it? So Christ, the Voice of God to us, knowing our peculiar weaknesses, puts *fearfulness* first in the list of hindrances. It looks harmless enough, but is in reality a most deadly hindrance. Also, remembering our weaknesses, He put *lies* at the end of the list. Why? Because each of the debarring sins is held up in its false position by *lies.* When all of the sinful tendencies are eliminated from us, we shall cease to have reason for falsities. Nowhere do *lies* take a more active form than in this

first named soul crime *fearfulness*. Satan presents to us all sorts of false terrors to thwart our aspirations towards the higher life. He whispers into our spirits all sorts of doubts and fears. He stations all sorts of phantom giants in our paths, giants that the slightest breath of prayer will dispel, if we live by faith in God instead of in ourselves. Given a people who are afraid to exercise their own free will, and who are weak and ignorant or prejudiced enough to believe in error rather than truth, and the battle is to the Evil One, and the battle has been gained by *lies*. Thank God that much of our *fearsomeness* is passing away, and we know that *lies* shall not always be able to pose as white-winged truths.

We see quite plainly that in this battle for life, which is now raging in our State, as well as in many others, there is absolute need of wise leaders and equally wise followers. They must be wise as leaders, we must be equally wise in our following. Every leader towards the Holy City, whether he be preacher or statesman, is utterly helpless without appreciative co-workers. His service is measured by those served; his success in this is limited by the strength of his co-workers. Christ were no Christ without the souls whom He must redeem from sin. Christ could have no Church, no Bride, if He have no co-workers. Therefore all spheres of life are of gravest importance. No soul, however humble, is free from the responsibility of the

purity of the State. One rises up and insists that asylums and prisons be not houses of torture. Another rises and declares that slavery is a diabolical injustice between man and man. Others have spent their lives in trying to discover remedies for some of our dreadful diseases. One rises to formulate a system by which we can send words of friendship, consolation, or mere business, to those far from us, with safety and with little cost. Others have risen, each in his place, to give to the world the steamship, the railway, the telegraph, the telephone and the wireless telegraph. What next shall come, our Creator, Christ, and perhaps the angels only know. When we turn our hopeful eye on the possibilities along the helpful scientific line, we are not only interested but awed. Who a short time ago would have dreamed of the triumphs of electricity? Who shall say that it shall never be superseded by, or augmented with, a still subtler element than this? Men are now struggling to conquer the secrets of the power of the air. We must wait to see with what result. We must thank God for these greater gifts, and certainly honour the noble spirits who have so fearlessly followed their call, and used their talents, one or many. But their gifts were from God, the giver of all things.

"All that 's good, and great, and true,
All that is, and is to be,
Be it old, or be it new,
Comes, O Father, comes from Thee."

G. Thring.

In the realm of religious and ethical service, the same may be said. Any spiritual truth that a soul brings to the notice of his receptive fellow man is a gift of God. We must honour the man, only as he is stedfastly working in the light of God towards the perfection of the people. These, more than any, need to have on their own breastplate Light and Perfection; Light to teach the spirit of man in wisdom, and that obedience to that light which shall result in the ultimate perfection of himself and the whole race. He who is obedient to his light may approach Jehovah and ask for direction, because he wears the Urim and Thummim ever upon his heart.

Should ordinary everyday persons receive gifts from God, or are they for the favoured few? It is quite evident that great gifts come to but few. Are we sure that only the few can attain? One thing is clear, and fortunately it is the one essential thing for us to know; God has promised His counsel and guidance to all who intelligently obey Him. If Christ's promises were made to all disciples, then we must be sure that we are really disciples; and thus we shall be heir to the promises. Christ's promises are to the common people, to the "great multitude," to-day even as then. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Shall we be given counsel in little things? First we ask, are there any little things? Christ said that the Father works, therefore He works. We may obtain some light on this question, by examining as well as we are able God's works. When we look into the heavens and behold His greatness in the inconceivable vastness of the starry firmament, and know that these work with such astounding precision that half-blind, and childishly ignorant men—though they be our intellectual giants—can calculate the orbits and tell us years in advance just which planet will be here and which will be there at such a date; we feel that we cannot serve with God as co-workers there, but only as insignificant, half-blind observers of a tiny point of His unthinkable universe. When these same men tell us of the minute and precise intricacies of His—to them—most infinitesimally atomic creations, and their astonishingly intricate workings, we feel that we cannot serve God there as co-workers. We cannot even conceive of His work. Where shall we "common people," we the "great multitude" assist as co-workers with Him? For work we must, or we shall never be Temples of God. Perhaps as we are *common people* we had better try, by His help, to co-operate with Him in the things which we can the most easily understand, and which we know to be within our capability to accomplish. This we *can* do. Blest with a constitution wherein the voice of the people, sanctioned by the

sovereign, is the only law, and that sovereign a model of humane and kingly qualities, we are indeed a people to be envied. Still, we do greatly err in many ways. But it rests with ourselves whether we retain these very many abominations of darkness, or whether we expose and destroy them as swiftly as possible. We see the cloud arising, we feel that we have the assurance of a speedy refreshing rain, in which the poor earth shall greatly rejoice. The experiences of Elijah are very edifying reading when we feel helpless and weak-kneed. Our *fearfulness* makes us so very helpless and weak-kneed, that when we attempt to walk before God we do not walk like a sturdy young child, a growing Son of God, but we fall about like a degenerate and underfed slum child, whose body is never well enough nourished to allow him to stand in that erectness, that is peculiar alone to healthy, happy childhood. A child does not *fear* naturally; he has to be taught that fire burns him. He does not fear that you are not telling the truth to him; he has to be taught that also. He is *obedient* until you teach him that your commands are not always wise or just. We, being so fearful, go limping about our work, whether it be seemingly small or great. Alas that we choose to ignore direction and aid, in our own apparently small duties!

There is actually occasion for an earnest and powerful Elijah to-day in our land, to cry as did he in days of old, "How long go ye limping between

the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." Then each was to call upon his own God. "And all the people answered and said, it is well spoken." And the followers of Baal cried long and pitifully, and leaped, or limped, about the altar, and cut themselves with knives, in their anxiety to be proven right. Elijah, in sarcasm, urges them to make more noise as perchance Baal is asleep, or needs to be called back from some journey. But all effort proved to be futile. Baal had failed them. And now it was the evening. So Elijah cried to *his* God, "Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." Then the fire came down and consumed the offering. And the people said, "Jehovah, He is God." It was after this that the much needed rain fell. If we believe in Israel's God, why do we go limping noisily about the altar of Baal? It is this miserable indecision that is the undoing of our endeavour. We face both ways—or try to. We are told that Baal means Lord, not so much however in the sense of Ruler, as of Master, Owner, Possessor. This god seems to have borrowed local colouring from the various peoples that worshipped at his shrine. But at all times he was a god who held his minions in a tight grasp. Is there not a lesson in this for us to-day? The Messiah came to depraved Israel many centuries later, and told them—a

different thing?—no, it was still the same warning. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." I wonder what local colouring our beloved Empire is giving Baal to-day—for is he not still the god of idolatrous Israel? And we are idolatrous; who would think of denying it? Are we Holy to Jehovah? Do we worship in spirit and in truth the one true God and Him only? Do we? If we hold the vain imagination in our minds that we do indeed worship Israel's real God in spirit and in truth, perhaps we had better read up some of the recently published works on economics, social systems, etc. This exercise may relieve us of some of our false sense of righteous security. It is not within my province to draw attention to particular grievances, but to draw attention to the responsibility of each citizen, be he man, woman or child, in regard to these grievances. A small child, if he only realize it, can be a small water drop of this benign and refreshing rain that is so surely portended for our near future. A little child, with a little light, and a loving obedience to that light, can make the world a little better:

"Little drops of water, little grains of sand,
. . . . . .
Little acts of kindness, little words of love,
Make this world an Eden, like the Heaven above."

Many of us were taught to say as our first lisping prayer to the Father:

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.
Fain I would be as Thou art;
Give me Thy obedient heart.
Thou art pitiful and kind,
Let me have Thy loving mind."

If the little children can do little acts of kindness, men and women of maturer years, and wider experience, should be able to do vastly wider-reaching service for the people. This we see many, many, of them doing. But have we as separate persons of a mass of citizens each and every one become determined to follow the teaching of Israel's Son, and do we listen to His voice only? Why, we seem to be too sleepy to hear any voice but the immediate call for food and clothing. Why is it that we do still go limping about the altar of Baal? Do we believe that he can save us?

We are so inert. I believe that all sociologists agree that the indifferent, unseeing, unfeeling inertness of the mass of our comfortable "middle-class" people is the most serious obstacle to progressive reform. There is a hue and cry against the rich and tryannical portion of our people to-day that is intense in strength, and we hope may prove to be invincible in its correcting qualities. This is necessary enough, since our heavenly Father has told us long ago by His prophets that these should suffer loss. But this overpowering, palsying inertia of

the "common people," "the great multitude," is much the greater foe to our restoration. It is here that the wise sociologist makes his attack, and necessarily so. Socialists, mostly, make their attack on the rich and powerful only, hence their inability to bring about many of the reforms which they so much desire. Still, these are wise enough to also strive to stir up that potent factor of our people, the electorate. I feel that it is not maligning this strong movement when I accuse them of working more in the spirit of hate and anger towards the oppressive idle rich than they do in love and kindness towards the very miserable poor. If they do in time—and they shall—turn their efforts into the service of the loving Saviour of men, they must change this attitude. Christ Jesus is not a hater of any man, but only of the evil sinning in man. Christ does not use His powers of conviction of truth to assist the comfortable "middle class" (all between richest and poorest) to ignore the poorest and curse the richest. He is sending the Spirit of Truth to this large class to get them into a state of wakefulness to the fact that they must remove the crimes of the richest, and must also remove the awful squalor of the poorest.

Sometimes I seem to see a vision of the "common people" as an exodus from the old Motherland. I see all that best and most virile portion of this great mass, quietly rising up, one by one, and

"as the Arab folds his tent and silently steals away," so do I see in this vision a stream, a never ending stream, silently stealing away to our waiting, happier, more generously measured great tracts of home-making areas—a stream that shall yet be, and now is, the saving of our beloved Empire. I see the seat of our Imperial Government removed to a newer, vaster field of federal activity. I see the British Isles carefully guarded by a loyal and loving family, as an aged parent who has passed into senile decay. I see her wasting population gradually ebb out until only these few feudal lords and their retainers remain. I see England as she is to-day, with all her splendid possibilities, having passed away, and existing only in vague old memories and traditions, as the remnants of a passing dream.

I see the hand of God even in the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The voice of the great virgin lands crying for more children for their vast areas, is becoming more and more articulate and beseeching to the people on these narrowly limited isles. "God 's in His heaven, All 's right with the world." And true it is that,

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform,
> He plants His footsteps in the sea,
> And rides upon the storm."

Love of country is rich in a man's heart, who has been born in *this motherland*, a love that is trans-

mitted unto the sons and daughters, and unto the generations following. It is one of our rightful heritages. It has taken many a hard circumstance to push our over-population off into a promised land, a vaster empire. When we read of how this has been effected, and is still being effected, it is difficult to keep our minds and hearts free from angry hate towards these so tyrannical oppressors. But, we must intensely pity the oppressor at all times, if we are to have the Light and Perfection on our breastplate, so that we may have wise judgment as before God's all-seeing eye. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The Bible abounds with the teaching that an awful retributive judgment awaits those who have more than is possible for them to use, while millions are in distressing need. To truly pity these I grant is difficult. These, together with the indifferent electorate, are the destroyers of our race, but we must say with the stricken Saviour, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And we may be assured that many do not realize the enormity of their sins of omission or commission. And so, if we of the inert mass could make a great effort to revive our dormant senses, and do all that we can, perhaps it would be an object lesson to this self-centred Mammon-possessed portion of our people. And thus we might become a *resurrected* and not a *decayed* people.

Sometimes I seem to see a fairer vision of old

England. I seem to see her strongest, most virile sons and daughters still streaming in a constant exodus to the more rigorous, more strenuous experiences of our colonies and dominions—Greater Britain. I see them bravely and with loyal pride, building such an Empire as this world never saw, perhaps never shall see again. I see lesser Britain still the seat of the Imperial administration, still the Crown Jewel amongst those less splendid, still the *motherland* of a numerous and healthy developing growing family. I see her developing within herself such Christlike qualities that the world wonders, and stands in awe of her goodness. I see the rich and masterful, humbly offering all their possessions for the redemption of their brothers in hunger-land. I see them giving of their culture to the children of ignorance. I see them fathering whole colonies of degenerate and homeless ones with tenderest care. I see the women of this responsible wealthy class gladly exchanging their glittering jewels for the precious gems of the lives of little hungry children. I see Mephistopheles shrinking backward, and ever backward, until he disappears behind the hills of darkness. I see the Redeemer of the world smiling in benign and brotherly tenderness over a once rebellious, but now repentant, race of people. I hear Him murmuring, As ye do it to these ye do it also to Me. For long years the Son of Man had scarce where to lay His weary head, but at last He finds a welcome home

in the hearts of men. May God in His mercy send us the realization of this fairer vision.

We may be assured that our most worldly people are tiring of the harlots, the swine, and the husks. We see marked indications of a hopeless *ennui* amongst them in the ever revolving rounds of their so-called pleasure. We see them in vain striving after some new excitement in the way of toys, some new relish in the way of sensual luxury. If these really desire a new and lasting sensation they will find that holy aspirations and tender compassion will provide, not only a new sensation within their minds and souls, but one of divinely happiest quality, one that will endure throughout eternity, and will never cloy their purified appetites. Oh, how these coarser pleasures cloy the finer senses and stifle heaven-born aspirations! We see some of this class already arising to go to their Father. Though they be yet afar off, still, if they have started to go towards Home, the Father is looking for them. If these would but walk carefully and obediently by the best light that they now have, and ask God for minute direction in all their new efforts towards the restoration of our people—and especially themselves—what a power for good they would be!

By helping to save the weak and needy under the Spirit's guidance they would be saving themselves. It is a most difficult thing for a rich person to be *saved*, as he is not sound enough in morals for

salvation. But Christ can save him by teaching him just what he had better do with his encumbering possessions. He explained the process to the lovable and rich young ruler, thus: "One thing thou lackest yet: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow Me." This testing advice made the young ruler exceeding sorrowful—and he went away. He could not bring himself to part with so much *that he thought was his own.* It is a lesson for all rich persons in the testing time, and the testing time must come, for the cattle upon a thousand hills are His, and the world is His and the fulness thereof. So we cannot withhold the legitimate use of it from the children with impunity. To the wicked, God said, "Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver: whoso offereth the sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his way aright will I show the salvation of God."

The salvation of God, what a restful abiding gift is offered to us, if we will but become worthy of it. Are the rich who are revelling in their cloying pleasures the only guilty ones? True, if I have little to give, I am not so important a factor in a community as he who has much; but, if I do not give of my little, my sin is the same crime as is that of the purse-bound millionaire. My sin causes less loss to the people than his. The salva-

tion of each of us is in grave peril. If I give the little that I can spare, I am at least equal to him who gives much from his vast resources. If I give a little from that which I am in need of myself, I excel him in generous courage. This we are taught from the illustration of the giving of the "mite" by the poor widow of old.

When one enters the larger field of the general public, where shall we point to the gravest peril? In "competitive business"—a term which loosely covers all useful phases of life, and some that are not useful—where shall we not find that *unsoundness which prohibits salvation?* Christ came that He might save the people from their sins. Competition itself is an unholy institution; and yet our business structures are founded upon it. If we pass our professional and commercial national life, as it really exists, before the tribunal of a few sayings of the Saviour, we shall find that we are unsound to the very core. If we were but righteous enough to fulfil the old law of "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," we should at least have some idea of justice. A man in a business office will smile when you suggest magnanimity from him towards other business men. To resist not, to turn the other cheek, to give his cloak after being robbed of his coat, to go farther than he is asked, to lend without discrimination, these things are quite outside of his philosophy. The fact is, he would soon be in the bankruptcy courts. And

yet our Saviour said that we must do all these things. This selfish competition is the most difficult and perilous plague spot which infects our people. Christ commands, "Do unto others as you would that they should do to you." Satan whispers to our selfish instinct, Others will do evil to you, do evil to them first in self-defence. Christ commands, "Bear ye one another's burdens": Satan whispers, Make others bear your burdens, make a strong position for yourself out of the weakness of others. And thus we see throughout our people, the strong sapping the vitality of the weak, the influential overpowering the insignificant. Survival of the fittest really seems to be Natural Law, and it certainly is *business law*, but our Saviour's law is of a different class. Business says, Save the few. Our Saviour says, Save all, and give the weak your especial care and consideration. And is not our Saviour's economics of a vastly wider reach than the narrow selfish competitive system of man? Put a test case. If occasion demanded that every grown man in the kingdom were required at once for some special service—defence if you will—are we a greater, stronger people because we have half-starved and treated worse than animals many millions of us? These are dead weights on a people's activity, when they should be sound and healthy, useful integral units of our Empire. We do not insist on sound men for Active Defence, as our Saviour told us to *resist not*, but there is no

defence so invincible as the sense of security arising from a splendid and wise people, each a splendid unit of a grand whole. Competition and inequality are incongruities in a Christian country. But these are our strongest motive-powers, not only in the lines of merchandise but in the legal and medical professions, and I am sorry to know also in the religious profession, in the ministry of this very gospel that was to redeem us from our unholy usages. There is little difference between the ordinary stock market, the Bulls and Bears of the pit, and the systems by which the choicest positions are gained by those who strive after them most craftily in the Churches. Evidence is not lacking to substantiate this grave charge. I think that we may find symbolic meaning in the incident of our Saviour and the money changers, whom He drove from out the Temple courts, with a scourge of cords. Be sure the symbol shall fulfil itself. The abominations are plentiful in the holy place to-day, no abomination is more deadly than the love of gain of the money changers. This brings into the very Temple courts the same competitive habit which undisguisedly obtains in commerce. But He will certainly come soon with the scourge of cords in His hand. How could even the priestly Aaron approach Jehovah without his proper regalia? He could not talk to Him nor could he be wise enough to judge the people until thus equipped. Nor can the priesthood to-day ap-

proach Jehovah and ask of Him that especial guidance, unless they too have a breastplate of precious stones, chiefest of which are Light and Perfection. The judging of the people, by them, is not a thing of to-day. *We "common people" judge of their actions more than they ours.* And they should be standing between us and our Saviour asking advice when it is specially required, and standing before the people as judges of right and wrong. Because they lack true Light, and are blind shepherds, and because they do not obey the best that they know, and thus become perfected, they have not these words on their hearts and their vision has failed. Where now is the prophet of God in the ministry of the Gospel? Where is the Apostle that can cast forth demons, heal the sick, talk with God, and stand continually in His blessed presence? Am I in error? Are there such? I do most sincerely hope that I may be, at least partly, in error. Surely *some of these are obtainers of some assurances* of the Spirit that they are true apostles. If none have these gifts, what shall we do? Shall we hold a mission to convert to the Evangel of the Lord Christ our ministry? But who of us could hold this mission? Who of us who do not minister at the sacred altar is fit to perform such service? We seem to be in an exceedingly grave peril. I think we had better unite throughout the land, in, first, a general mission unto repentance, then perhaps by the help

of the Spirit whom He will send, we may become more nearly obedient to our Light. In time, we may attain to that much to be desired status, Perfection. Not that we can dare hope for fulness of the obedient, the abundant life, in this world, but we can and must attain to that state of being which compares with a finely developed child of obedient and loving disposition; the Perfect Child.

"Guide me, O Thou Great Jehovah!
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven!
Feed me till I want no more.

"Open Thou the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer!
Be Thou still my strength and shield."

CHAPTER X

"IF I BY THE FINGER OF GOD"

"But if I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you. . . . He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."
LUKE xi. 20–23.

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do them, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father." JOHN x. 37, 38.

"Brief brawling day, with its noisy phantasms, its poor paper crowns tinsel gilt, is gone; and divine everlasting night with her star diadems, with her silences and her veracities is come! What hast thou done, and how? Happiness, unhappiness; all that was but thy wages thou hast; thou hast spent all that, in sustaining thyself hitherward; not a coin of it remains with thee, it is all spent, eaten; and now thy work, where is thy work? Swift, out with it; let us see thy work."

THUS Carlyle could never bring himself to see a human being apart from his work. Was he prejudiced in taking such sweeping views regarding the importance of work? After all, do we not always consciously, or it may be unconsciously, see

a man entirely through his works? That we each may have different standards of what we deem to be valuable service, or otherwise, is certain, but we must mainly agree that personality is made up of capacity for some physical, intellectual, or spiritual energy.

The man who is the most highly endowed with all these is a superman, shall we call him? A mere giant in physical strength and stature might be only a super-pugilist. A merely intellectual giant might become little better than an unprinted encyclopædia. A merely spiritual giant might become far too oblivious to mortal affairs to be a really useful citizen. If we have not a goodly measure of health and strength, we are greatly impeded in our desire to be useful. If we have bodily vigour but a poorly equipped and unevenly balanced or stunted intellect, we are, I think, more seriously impeded. But if we have both vigour of body and strength and culture of mind, we are still quite useless as co-workers with Christ, unless we are spiritually vigorous. Many a soul that is confined in a weary and suffering body has done grand service to the race. Many instances could be quoted of such. Also many a simple-minded soul with little or no culture has been the doer of grand deeds for the brotherhood of man. Many of these also could be brought to mind. But you cannot show me a man void of spiritual life who has accomplished lasting good to his fellows. But

I do not wish to be misunderstood in the meaning of the term *spiritual*. I take it that he who has for the burden of his desires the lifting of humanity to a higher plane, and who feels that he is thus striving in conscious unison with the Over-soul, this man, I take it, is *spiritual-minded*. He may be of any or no conscious creed, but he will have lifted himself up through these mists to a plane that is within vision of the Throne of the Redeemer of Mankind. And if we desire to beget a super-race we shall be obliged to strive towards this end by bringing every unit of the whole into this excellent state.

Perhaps the classics give us the truest picture of our race as men of great physical strength, health, and beauty. This *mere animal* age cannot be said to have ceased to be, until we as enraged or avaricious animals cease to slay and devour one another. Until we cease to slay in war, that most savagely brutal of all our many *mere animal* propensities, we are still mere pugilists. So long as some of us have food that we do not require, while some of us do require it for the proper sustenance of our bodies we are devouring one another. We are taking the flesh from off our brother's body, and we have not even the excuse that we need or desire it. We slay and devour in many ways that have to be traced out before being fully realized by us. Do we not still "devour the poor secretly"? I greatly fear that animalism still largely predominates. But

even in classic days some were wise, some were even spiritual. Our present age was young when Enoch walked with God, and Abraham separated himself from his spiritual contemporaries and became the friend of God. We were long ago given a Moses and a Solon, and we have long ago learned to love the prophets, and some of the less favoured seers, the philosophers. But the animal age seems to have overlapped strangely through medieval times and has not yet ceased its unwholesome influence. There seems to have been a striving for greater intellectual vigour just preceding the Christian era. The prophets, philosophers and poets, and such Apostles as Paul and John, and some others of the early Christian era, were of a brain-stirring intellectual type. A little later on, the early Christian religionists were of a strong mental capacity, and continued to be so for a few centuries. A century or two still later on, and intellectuality lay gasping for its very life in the degrading embrace of mere animalism, until Europe became flooded with one of the cruellest and most loathsome reversions to animalism that the poor earth has (I hope) ever witnessed. Animalism said to its children, "If you dare to think so-and-so you shall be burnt, sawn asunder, racked." And so countless spiritually and intellectually minded sons of the race were hurried away into the presence of the dear Saviour Whom they loved so faithfully, and Whom they had

striven even unto death to serve. But the intellectuality of our race had been re-aroused, never more to sleep. Although our pugilistic or brutal instinct is not yet conquered, we rejoice to know that it is quietly dying from the cleansing fires of the intellect. It is dying of scorn and shame. While this is true of our cruelly brutal instincts, yet from out the ashes of these fires there is arising a new physical instinct, which has for its purpose the giving of bodily health and vigour to the children of the race. The mind of man is conceiving the idea that a race is composed of countless peoples. Each people is composed of a variety of persons. In nearly all States some are degenerate for want of health-sustaining conditions; some of whom have too much luxury, and too little incentive in life; some of whom have too little to eat, too few clothes, too squalid habitations, and for highest incentive the next loaf of bread. So we find, that in what we term the "middle-class" life, where the mind is at its highest in humanity, with but meagre exceptions, there is a strong thought-wave arising which has for its high-tide the equalization and uplifting of the brotherhood of mankind. This movement, thank God, is in no way confined to our own nation. But we must see the fact that the equalizing process is well begun in our own midst. There is one way in which I think, perhaps, we are leading in this high attaining. I think that our *highest* leaders are conscious that they are working for the general

brotherhood in unison with Christ the Redeemer of men. We feel that, so far, these efforts have been mostly of an intellectual character, and that slowly, but surely, the spiritual instincts of our leaders are becoming more fully aroused, and are more surely permeating all efforts towards that high goal, a Redeemed Nation. When the leaders of our nation and a goodly following of this great body, the "middle class," the electorate, have publicly witnessed that they will serve only Christ, and have become endowed with the Holy Spirit so that they may always be wise to do, then it is time for those who "Devour the poor secretly," or more openly, to tremble with fear for an impending doom. Already we see many, in anger and fear, striving in all conceivable ways to escape from the overshadowing Nemesis:

> "Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
> Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."

God has created, has preserved, and will redeem. It is He Who holds the universe in His hands, and composes the music of the heavens, Who orders the countless systems of stars in their smaller and greater orbits, Who chastens the infinitude of space by the cooling and invigorating winds, Who divides the sea from land, and sets the nearer winds and clouds on their daily journey on our little planet, Who sorts out the various elements for our

use, and forms us and sustains us in our harmonious, but intricate, bodies; and breathes of His Own Spirit into us in order that we may not go back into decay, but go ever forward and upward into a state which He has prepared for us. It is He Who healeth all our infirmities, Who arranges the minute atoms of our bodies, and orders them to their respective places of service. Service! Where would we poor atoms be, did the Great God refuse to serve us? Shall we never learn that *service only*, is great?

We must cast aside for ever the idea, if we wish for a forever, that service is ignoble. "We serve the Race" is the only legend that is worthy of place in our heraldry. This motto is worthy of the only eternal nobility, depend upon it. God is God because He is mighty to conceive and to perform. That state of All-Thought and All-Might is God. God spoke from out His heavens to us in acknowledgment of One of us, Who had conquered all ill tendencies, Who had become perfected by the pain and travail of His soul, and had so arrived at true Sonship thus, "This is my beloved Son, . . . hear ye Him." This beloved Son Who is our Redeemer from sins said, "My Father worketh even unto now, and I work." We boast of our noble ancestry, but none surely has greater than God and His Son, our Lord. This is Eternal Nobility. Jesus was constantly admonishing His professed followers to work the good works. It is unthink-

able that a true lover of God the Father would be unwilling to assist the perfect Son in the redeeming and restoring process of our day and generation. It is an untenable position to hold, that one may be a believer in the Redeemer, and not strive to assist Him in His office of saving the people from their sins—our sins. But then, we do hold fast to many of our untenable positions. Intellect has not quite risen to his throne as yet. On our breastplate must be written Light, as preceding Perfection. When the "Light of the World" spoke to us during His short human ministry to humanity, He invariably spoke words of such wisdom and reason that twenty centuries of criticism has not been able to refute His words. Verily He was indeed the Word. It is to Him alone that we must go to find the last word on any social subject. In His esoteric teaching we shall certainly find our sure answer. The Word spoke to us from out His throne thus, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is." As we think, so we work. As we work, so are we judged. As we are judged, so are we rewarded. As we are rewarded, so shall we live or die. But it is not of first importance to my soul as to whether I die or live. The *highest* duty of my soul is to endeavour by the help of the Spirit to persuade other souls to endeavour to live.

The whole duty of man is both simple and com-

plex. Simple in the one desire to do that which is just and right, and complex enough, as we become interwoven in the intricacies of modern social and commercial life. As we are each mentally trained, and socially environed, so will our outlook on the distressing and disgracefully evil conditions which prevail amongst us, take colour. As they take colour to us, so do we observe them, so only can we observe them, so must we look carefully into causes and effects, and so shall our vision shape our service. As our vision is, as our talents are, so is our usefulness shaped and measured. This is our individual call to duty from the Father of all the children of men. "Duty! wondrous thought, that workest neither by fond insinuations, flattery, nor by any threat, but merely by holding up thy naked law in the soul, and so extorting for thyself always reverence, if not always obedience; before whom all appetites are dumb, however secretly they rebel; Whence thy original?" Whence thy original? Kant wisely asks. Do we not find the true answer to this in the lines, "Stern daughter of the voice of God! Oh, Duty! if that name thou love." And so we shall find duty to be the call of God to us to fill our day, and use all our talents for work, even as He works, as the Son of man and of God works. Duty is ever calling us to service. She is that *inner voice* which strives to weave out from our talents, culture, and circumstances, a path for the conscious will to

exert its volition over our rather unwilling minds and bodies. Sometimes she lashes us as with a scourge of cords; at time she suggests, persuades, or pitifully entreats us to rise to our privileges of service. This so noble privilege—service for the children—is, shall we say, the soul's food. The starving soul pitifully entreats us to work for our own, its own, security. It lashes us on—if we be awake—to do that thing for the common welfare that we alone are called upon by God to do. This call comes to all *real souls*. There is a strange word said by Peter. He is speaking of a class of evil persons and describes them as "Creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed." If we are not conscious of any desire to assist in this redemptive work, we must be either still in coma, very wicked, or we may perchance be one of those of whom St. Peter speaks as "mere animals." I do not see how this can be refuted by any one who believes in Christ and the Scriptures, or by any one who considers the conditions which are essential to the eternal life of a soul.

Jesus Christ told His accusers thus, "But if I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you. . . . He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth."

We are led to believe by Church history that there has been an uninterrupted succession of

apostles of the Evangel of Jesus Christ from His immediate day even until now. We would presume the case, that this succession worked through the first three hundred years, and into the united Christian and Pagan Church of Constantine's day. That, of course, gave us the organization which we now know as the "Roman Catholic Church." If there were local secessions before this event, this succession would be also their right to claim. Afterwards, also, divisions from this old mother-Church would still be in direct succession if it were an ordained clergy that seceded. So we take the stand that all clergy of either Roman, Greek, or Protestant Catholic Church are in direct succession from Christ and His immediate Apostles. When our clergy seceded, at the time of the Reformation, they brought this official distinction with them. I believe that few of the Nonconformists of England claim to have an unbroken succession, so we shall not include that phase of Protestantism in our land, *here*, but only that which claims distinct succession, namely, our State Church of England. We cannot therefore deny the right of our National Clergy to be the direct followers of the first Apostles. Neither can we deny this distinction to the clergy of the Church of Rome. Therefore all prophecies concerning Christendom involve, at least, these two classes of clergy. The Church of Rome we as a nation have for ever set aside. Therefore the responsibility

of the religious life of our people should rest entirely on the shoulders of the clergy of our State Church. And this distinction we find that they claim. Nonconformists are, according to our laws at present, irresponsible outsiders. So we shall hope to find the true faith as it was in Christ Jesus within this sacred circle, Anglicanism. We search our Book of Common Prayer, the most blessedly beautiful book in the world I do most truly believe, outside of our Scriptures. We are filled with admiration at the devotional spirit of it, and feel that the Spirit of God surely permeates its service. We feel it to be good enough guide for our devotional exercises, if we also be permeated by the same Spirit. We must stand in a rebellious attitude towards some pronouncements in her too exclusive creeds, unless we can find a way of intelligently qualifying them, *as they should always be qualified.* We rejoice at the purity and holiness of our National Religion when we read all these beautiful lines. We read in religious and historic literature that "our faith" has been all-sufficient to give regeneration of soul to many of her children. Some human souls have attained to most Christlike quality within her fold, and have lived *only* to serve the race as best they could, even as did our Saviour in His best capacity. At present we look within her formal organization for the true apostles of the Lord Christ. We may well rejoice to be able to say that we may—by

searching—find them, *not a few*. *Not a few* are in an agony of apprehension at the desecration of the holy place. *Not a few* are endeavouring, we may well believe, with all their powers to bring into prominence once more the Evangel of Jesus the Christ. *Not a few*, we may well believe, would most willingly cast aside the glare and tinsel and bring the people back once more to the feet of Him Who said, "Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." But the effort is too great for the few alone. And as we, or they, are not like little children, we are not in the Kingdom of Heaven, but in a place where every foul creature thrives: such foul creatures as Greed, Ambition, Tyranny, Self-adulation and Self-aggrandisement will there be found flourishing. Who will deny this? Oh, for a spiritual mission amongst our clergy! All true Christlike mission work must first begin in Jerusalem—Spiritual Jerusalem. Does she need this work of cleansing in this nation? Read the moans of pain and righteous anger that are arising from *the few*, her more evangelical numbers, and you will agree that surely the abomination of desolation is in the holy place. *If apostolic succession brought holiness all would be well.* But does it?

Does legal succession to any office ensure that it shall be wisely functioned? Our Royal succession has been filled in by a variety of persons, some of

whom have disgraced our throne, some of whom have added stability and glory to it, some of whom have given it comparative purity in religious and social life, some of whom have stood and received the crown as though it were a responsibility placed upon them by God Himself—as indeed it is. We think that an unprejudiced mind will find pretty full evidence—as full as most other historic evidence—that our Royal line is in direct succession from the line of Judah, and should always be considered from that standpoint. When Jacob was about to be gathered to his fathers, he called together his sons that he might foretell to them their destinies. To Judah he said, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, [marginal rendering] *till he come to Shiloh, having the obedience of the peoples.*" Although there seems to be lack of absolute surety as to whether Shiloh refers to the Messiah, or to the city of Shiloh, it matters little to us, since we know this city to be the abiding place of the Ark of the Covenant for a long time, and we know it to be in other ways a city strikingly symbolic in meaning. It was also a *sanctuary* and a "striking example of the divine indignation." If we take the word Shiloh to mean a man's name, then we find that it means Pacific or Peacemaker. This view favours the accepted rendering for the R.V., namely, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until

Shiloh come; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be." While naturally we must all prefer this latter explanation, still we find the idea contained in both, that the sceptre should remain with Judah until the obedience of the people is ensured. Alas, we cannot dare to assert that the peoples have ever yet been *obedient* or in full measure *pacific*. But do we not see the beginnings of a series of climactic completions of this long-reaching prophetic word? I think that we should expect our sceptre to remain exactly where it is to-day—and has been for ages under God's most peculiar providence—until the peoples have become *obedient* and *pacific*. Then Christ alone shall reign, or overreign.

When *our people* have all become *obedient and pacific*, we shall be a redeeming power in the world. Do we not see this foreshadowing of Christ's conquest creeping into all our public affairs? Do we not see that men are pausing in their mad party strife to consider that which is just and right? Do we not see the spiritual qualities of our leaders, from King downwards, striving to rise up through all the encumbrances of animalism, and wrongly directed intellectuality, that almost overwhelms them? The State department of our *Church and State* really seems to be in a more active spiritual condition than the Church phase, in its general function. It is the State's function to make wise laws, and see that the people obey them. It is the

Church's function to be an irresistible influence on the minds and lives of the people towards morality and godliness, to restore the sick, to make comfortable the needy and afflicted, and to lead them all gently to the feet of the Lord Jesus Who said, Suffer the little ones to come unto me. Self-sacrifice and humble service for the uplifting of the individuals of our nation is its only legitimate function as an organization. All students of the Evangel of Jesus must see it thus. If our clergy have come in an unbroken line of succession from the first Apostles of Jesus the Christ, then they must follow in the footsteps, and teach the same teaching, and do the same works, and live the same sort of life of utter self-sacrifice, as did these Apostles. *The few* of our clergy seem to keep close to the first teaching, but as is well known and fully conceded, *the many* are veering dangerously near to Rome, and some are openly returning to her idolatrous usages. This, no one who reads the news of the hour would think of denying. *But can even "the few" do the first works?* Does the message of our Lord to the Church at Ephesus apply to them?—

" I know thy works, and thy toil and stedfastness (or patience), and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them that call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false; and thou hast stedfastness (or patience) and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary. But I have

this against thee, that thou didst leave thy first love. Remember therefore whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works; or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent."

And does not the message to the Church at Philadelphia apply to the still fewer souls who have a "little power"?

"I know thy works (behold, I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut), that thou hast a little power, and didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name. . . . Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

On these *lesser few*, under Christ, do our hopes depend. If there is succession of office, there should also be succession of power. I think there must be a *little power* in *some few* of our clergy to-day, and so also all down the weary "Two thousand years of wrong." The final call to the Eleven was to repent from their unbelief, and to go and preach the gospel to the whole creation. Did not our State Church repent in a degree, at the time of the Reformation; and has she not since been a zealous missionary power throughout the world? Is she not still so? But has the Messiah's promise been realized as yet? If not, why has it not? He said:

"And these signs shall accompany them that believe; in my name shall they cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

It is written that these "went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." If there be a *few* true successors to the Eleven, this promise is certainly theirs. Then we may with reason inquire whether we have, or have not, in our midst, Apostles of Christ, who hold and use these powers. We would draw from our above quotation that *some* have a *little* power. I think that in the face of all the occultism that is being brought into evidence by many persons quite outside this sacred circle, and in the face of all the healing that has undoubtedly been accomplished by Christian Science, surely, pretty soon our faith in the possibility of a present Christ assisting and endowing a willing company of apostles, will be an acknowledged verity. There is nothing standing in the way of these endowments except *unbelief*, and a *strange unwillingness*, on the part of our religious leaders. Healing has been done to some extent in a few instances. I know of a small Christian denomination (which is also, I believe, in the United States) in my own province, who are

not only Christians, but "orthodox," who certainly have the gift of healing the sick by prayer and anointing; and proofs of this have come to my definite knowledge. My personal experience is not utterly lacking in this line, both in the receiving and the doing, but only as occasional, and not as a fixed certainty at all times, but quite enough to establish the verity in my own belief that *Christ is not dead but risen*. If there is a vestige of truth in Christian Science, occultism, and kindred things —and who can deny it—why is it so difficult for us to think that *Christ is indeed risen*, and that He will keep His promises to His sleepy Church if they will only awake, repent, and accept of the marvellous gift which is their heritage? In the sweetest of assuring memories which have come down to us from the conversations of Jesus and His disciples, there is one word that is most strangely and insultingly ignored by His loud-voiced general Church. He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." I wish that these three chapters (John xiv., xv., xvi.) were read and re-read by *the few* who are so near to being true apostles, so that they might feel filled with repentance at their so long ignored opportunity, and would conclude to rise to their privilege of power for

service as one man, united with the one thought, to accept the endowment of the Spirit of God, and to do the first works of Jesus Christ and His immediate Apostles. *This I believe they must do, or give place to others who will.* When Jesus began His ministry, He began expounding the Scriptures to the acknowledged Church of His time and race. He gave instructions to the Apostles to begin preaching at Jerusalem. Is there a service, or mission to our nation along this line, and if so, by whom should it be done? We need not be long in doubt as to whether this line of service is required, in order to clear the body religious of its heretical usages. And this, we rejoice to see, we find these *few*, who are more nearly Christlike, doing. Some of these heretical teachings and practices are easily refuted, notably that of the worship of the mother of Jesus of Nazareth, often impiously called the "Mother of God." How can we but feel the tenderest sympathy and affection for this "Fair Maid of Galilee," in the wonderfully mystifying travail, of both body and soul, that came upon her?—in her strange and un-understandable experiences with her strangely and uniquely gifted Son—and at last, saddest of all, in her disappointed motherhood. The "Mother of Sorrows" lived to see this so promising a Son hanging on an ignominious cross along with lawless robbers. Though she afterwards saw that the grave could not hold Him, still, her suffering

must always have been extreme, and her disappointment in Him at many times during His life, must have been torture to her soul. So we must sympathize with her in great tenderness, and give proper honour to one who was by God given the honour of being the human mother of Him who is our Saviour—but here we must stop. The worship and bowing down to graven images is so plainly an idolatrous heresy and usage that we may rather wonder how people who profess Christianity ever have fallen into this entirely unscriptural and wholly satanic pitfall. As regards addressing our clergy as "Fathers," and as to speaking of the early Christian writers as the "early Fathers," we can easily judge how far it is sanctioned by Christ Jesus our Founder. In that notable address of our Lord given to us by Matthew, after giving a description of a ministry which looks very familiar to us to-day, he says distinctly: "And call no man your father on the earth; for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven." These utterances along here for a few pages of the Scripture would be worth the while of our ritualistic friends to make a study of. All these foolish practices are so foreign to true Christianity that we do much wonder that it is not more generally perceived whence they have emanated. It is not right, not even fair, to play the part of Apostles of Christ Jesus and all the while to work steadily for the final overthrow of His Kingdom.

When our nominal Church is cleansed, the cleansing of our nation, aye the world, will soon follow. Are there no demons to cast forth to-day? Is there a noble army of Apostles who can say with the Messiah, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you"? Who will teach the people that he that is not working for the Kingdom is working against it; that they who are not gathering into it, are scattering it? The demons of all sorts of lusts are holding us in their unholy thraldom. The lust of wealth; the lust of powerful, baneful influence; the lust of terrorizing the weaker ones into submission; the lust of sensual passions, to the ghoulish hurt of our race; the lust of that insidious suicidal habit, strong drink; the lust of expensive and rare foods, in the face of the starving little ones; the lust of personal vanity, which seduces some to lavishly waste on the adornment of their own persons, while the millions are shivering in inadequate rags; the lust of assertiveness and arrogance of mind; the lust of, even learning, at the expense of the Christian life; the lust of the sensational, the phenomenal, the spectacular; and lusts too numerous to mention: these are the demons to be cast out to-day. If all these demons were cast forth into some great herd of swine—to which they are closely allied—what a joyous world of souls we should be. How easy would be the healing of all our infirmities. Those who are

fearless enough to make the attempt, should remember that no ill can touch them if they be true Apostles of the Lord Christ; no serpent can bite, or deadly thing hurt them. Christ said it. Is it that they are not willing to use this offered finger of God, or do they not see need of it, or whatever is it that does so unreasonably but effectually hinder the work of the Father? Don't you believe that Christ is in the Father, and the Father in Him? You should believe for the very work's sake. All sane men, who are Christians, know that there are awful and foolishly hurtful things existing today which could easily be overcome by the *united effort of those who believe*. All the commands and beseechings of our Lord seem to be of little avail in His Own house. "But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." From this utterance, applied to His present day house, it would seem as though we must hope for true apostleship, with but few exceptions, *outside* of our merely nominal spiritual Jerusalem. But we shall soon, I hope, find those who shall be true successors of Christ in that *true spiritual Jerusalem* which is not confined, thank God, within the prison bands of any dogmatic organization, but is within the hearts of men who can do great works with Christ; who can say with the Christ, "If I do not the works of my Father,

believe me not. But if I do, then though ye believe me not, believe the works, that ye may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."

"Jerusalem the glorious!
The joy of the elect!
O dear and future vision,
That eager hearts expect;
Ev'n now by faith I see thee,
Ev'n here thy walls discern;
To thee my thoughts are kindled,
And strive, and pant, and yearn."

Bernard of Cluny, tr.

CHAPTER XI

"QUIT YOU LIKE MEN, BE STRONG"

"Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love." 1 Cor. xvi. 13, 14.

"Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building." 1 Cor. iii. 8, 9.

"Oh! it is hard to work for God,
To rise and take His part
Upon the battle-field of earth,
And not sometimes lose heart!

"Workman of God! oh, lose not heart,
But learn what God is like;
And in the darkest battle-field,
Thou shalt know where to strike,

"For right is right, since God is God,
And right the day must win,
To doubt would be disloyalty,
To falter would be sin."

F. W. Faber.

THE battle-field on which our nation in its entirety is to-day marshalled, has for its issue at the last analysis, not so much bread for the hungry, or relief of the suffering, as the differ-

entiating between right and wrong. All economics are entirely covered by this one issue. Therefore the call has gone forth to each soul, man, woman, or child, to decide this day whom they will choose. God has been very gracious to our nation; and it is high time that we put away our strange gods and turned to serve Jehovah, and Him only. Every Lord's Day throughout the year we piously testify that Him only will we serve. This we do, or should do, in all religious gatherings, whether it be State Church or Nonconformist. All our people (with a few rebellious exceptions) loosely acknowledge Christ Jesus as the *Logos* of God, and as our Saviour. Once a week, England, with her lips, testifies her allegiance to this King of Kings. She is the nucleus of a vast Empire of varied religious hue. It is for her to so lift up the Son of Man that all these peoples shall be drawn in irresistible admiration and adoration towards Him. Here lies our entire battle-ground. Christ is right. Satan is wrong. On the side of Christ's reign are all the building and ennobling impulses of our day and generation. On the side of Satan's reign are all the destructive and debasing impulses of our day and generation. Nearly two thousand years ago Christ laid down His code of perfect ethics. Nearly two thousand years ago did Christ refuse to accept the rule of the kingdoms of this world—at Satan's price. For this long time has our Saviour been valiantly fighting to wrest His

kingdom from Satan's grasp. For some reason which is in the wisdom of the Father, Christ was not to accomplish this end for a given length of time. It is well nigh universally conceded by Bible students to be nearing its completion. There is every evidence of it in human affairs to-day, not only in our vast Empire, but throughout the world. Even Satan himself must laugh in derision at a so-called Christian who is not to-day working in unison with the Saviour of Men. The position is so untenable as to be an inconceivable folly in one who, even loosely, professes allegiance to the Saviour of Men. It is like playing about the mouth of a rumbling, seething volcano, which is well known to be on the eve of eruption. Cowardly fear alone should be sufficient cause to drive the multitude into the forming columns of the coming King. Righteous fear of God were an infinitely better reason for flocking to His standard. We have crowned our new earthly king, whom we all delight to honour. We, even the most pacific and sober-minded of us, are satisfied that the peace of our Empire shall be maintained by invincible defence. This must necessarily be our position until our Empire has become in all its issues obedient to the greater King: He Who saves the people from their sins. When we cease to sin, we may with assurance lay down our arms, and beat our swords into ploughshares and our spears into pruning hooks. This is the time when "They

shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid." This is when the ox that treadeth out the corn is not muzzled, when he that plougheth and thrasheth doeth it in hope of partaking, when "the husbandman that laboureth must be the first to partake of the fruits." But until this has all become a verity we must, at least, be valiant soldiers of the coming King. We must not fear or falter, for that is sin. We must quit us like brave soldiers, who know that they are fighting for a righteous cause, therefore must in the end win. And we must not consider any self-sacrifice too great.

In the code of ethics given us in the various reports of the conversations of the Master, we find a standard of self-renunciation set up, that would puzzle the most self-sacrificing and unworldly of us to follow wholly. And yet it is said that He taught His disciples these things. If any of us feels that he would like to conform his life, thought, and action to the code of the King, let him try it in all earnestness of purpose. We feel pretty confident that unless such a one were possessed of almost godlike cleverness in the undertaking, and unless the Lord Christ especially protected him from the presumption of beggars, and the requirements of the physical body, he would soon reach the haven of the poor-house, prison, or insane asylum. Who could see it otherwise? Then are we to conclude that we are commanded

to a position which we cannot fill? Then shall we conclude that the Messiah failed as a lawgiver? May we of the Faith not logically feel somewhat chagrined to find that our Lawgiver failed, where a Moses, Lycurgus, Justinian, and a Solon may be said to have succeeded? We have no doubt that large numbers of citizens amongst their peoples absolutely obeyed their codes. Our national laws, I think we may say, are absolutely obeyed by the great majority of our citizens to-day. Can this be said of the citizens to whom Christ left His code of ethics? Then we may well ask, Why has His régime so far failed to compel obedience? To answer this reasonable query we must first note the difference between the character of these local codes and that of Christ. Moses gave forth the law as God instructed him. This was God's mode of disciplining His chosen people, thus preparing them for a day of grace and a régime that was not to work by punitive coercion but by the regenerated volition of the spirit of man. We find that these other lawgivers gave to these peoples codes formulated upon their requirements and their ability to obey them. Not the best they could form, but the best that the people were capable of obeying. The result in every case was the same. These codes only served for the nonce, they were not vitally imperishable, but were excellent by way of discipline. When Christ came His mode was different, one might say opposite. Indeed He was

scarcely a lawgiver at all in the same sense as these truly great men. First, His field was not a few contemporary peoples, but the whole race. Not only contemporary, but for all the ages of ages. Not only for those still on earth, but also for those who had passed into the spirit world before His day, those to whom He hastened to preach after His physical death. It is clearly seen that His sphere was vastly wider than these notable economists. This in itself would differentiate His mode from theirs. In His mode He was more in line with the best philosophers. But philosophy was idealistic only; while Christ had authority. If Christ had the highest idealistic philosophy, and at the same time authority, whence His failure? We must confess also, though, that neither the laws of these splendid statesmen, nor the dreams of the idealist philosophers, brought much *abiding* purity to the soul of man.

If we open our mental eyes wide enough to take in the larger vision of a dream of super-men, of super-souls, we shall find that Christ's mode was the only one which could unite both, for all time, and amongst all peoples. So His Father, Who is in Heaven, sent Him out into this sphere of action with this one eternal purpose before Him, to save the people from their sins, and to establish a new Kingdom, and it was to be in the *hearts* of men. It was to be the day of grace, not a punitive disciplinary work, but a renewing of the image of God

in the heart; thus re-erecting a hidden holy shrine in each soul where the fires of cleansing shall always be burning. A crucible of the soul, where its volition shall be ever purified from dross, and ever strengthened to aspire Godward. Wherein is made possible a glorified form of reversion to type, an atavism to the idealism and obedience of the Morning in Eden of our race. Alas, that this divine dreamlike dawn of love so soon passed away; and in its place came the glare of a lurid, threatening, long-drawn day of hate, greed, bloodshed, and all classes of appalling crimes. Disobedience seems a small failing, but it has for its horrid brood all the incarnated demonism which has given us little but horror in the reading of the history of our race. Take any condensed history of our race, and its interest is almost wholly kept up by regaling us with an account of how this conqueror overcame that weaker one, and how many men were slain in this unholy action. Oh! the history of our race is a horrible gory tale of hate and avarice!

And so we see it that Christ was sent to draw the race back to its first state of innocency, when the Father said He saw that His creation was good. I think that perhaps our race is to be brought *by a very long path* up to Eternal Perfection. I think that perhaps this world is a sort of school in which we learn the utter folly of these suicidal, selfish instincts. I think that our civilized peoples are

beginning to conceive the idea that Christ's régime might after all be worth adopting from a purely human common-sense standpoint. Wholly blind, and partly blind, persons stand obstinately in the path of this divine impulse. But Christ was sent by the Father to accomplish a splendid ideal within the Soul of our Race. The Father also gave Him all authority to bring it about by a certain time. We cannot hinder its coming, but we can by misusing our volition work constantly against His coming Kingdom to *our own infinite loss.* Every man can, I believe, keep holiness out of his own heart, at least for a time. But we should all be more unscientific than our age warrants if we did so. We cannot push back the high tide no matter how we throw our puny might against it; but we may be dashed against the rocks, or be sunken ignominiously in the oblivion of its vast depths. *And the loss would be our own.* The Kingdom is coming quickly, and may be clearly seen in outlines now by the observant and discerning spirit of a man. When it shall have fully come, we shall have attained to be Sons of God, joint heirs with Christ, Temples fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

To this ideal must we each of us aim, no matter how humble or simple we be; for it is the city of those who are like little children, simple, obedient, innocent. We have, in a previous chapter, said in regard to this personal aim towards the Kingdom, and our duty regarding its furtherance as individ-

uals thus, Duty is ever calling us to service. She is that inner voice which strives to weave out from our talents, culture, and circumstances, a path for the conscious will to exert its volition over our rather unwilling minds and bodies. Sometimes she lashes us with a scourge of cords, at times suggests, persuades, or pitifully entreats us to rise to our privilege of service. This so noble privilege—service for the children—is, shall we say, the soul's food. The starving soul pitifully entreats us to work for our own, its own, security. It lashes us on—if we be awake—to do that thing for the common good that we alone are called upon by God to do. This call comes to all real souls. As we are to aim at becoming more like little children we shall at first try to find a few first principles on which we may begin our service. So first, we should strive with all our hearts to escape from the thraldom of party politics, schools of thought, or sectarianism in religious matters. We must *agree to disagree* in these minor matters as we cannot hope to see alike in anything where the mind of man plays so prominent a part as it does in these partyisms. But we can and must learn to differentiate between that which is aiming towards the removal of all wickedness amongst us, and that which is strong to retain it; that which is bringing the minds and souls of men together in the happy bonds of an eternal brotherhood, and that which fosters hatred and distrust. A little child knows

right well when he is selfish and disobedient to his parents' commands. Surely we may know as much.

It seems to be a law of our bodies that proper exercise of a part strengthens that part for still further capabilities. And so with the mind. At our schools, much is taught because it is calculated to give strength to the intellect rather than because the subject is useful *per se;* notably, Higher Mathematics, which so few are called upon to make use of after school days. And so, if we use our simple knowledge of what is right and what is wrong, and implicitly obey its dictum, we shall grow stronger in our vision of what really is right and what really is wrong. And the many small right acts of many simple folk make a splendid showing at times. Perhaps a little child can be a comfort to her mother by her dear prattle and sweet obedience, thereby giving that mother courage to do greater service; or perchance the mother can in turn encourage some soul who is called to do a seemingly greater or more public work. Nothing in life is small unless isolated from the whole.

We see it that it is the will of God the Creator that our men be for the most part the public workers. Through the nature of our physical life, through the circumstances of motherhood, we may see it to be impossible to arrange it otherwise. A childless woman finds her vocation where she

can, by God's providence. But in the call to a nation to rise to its privilege of service for Christ and His Kingdom, the importance of motherhood stands pre-eminently first of all classes of humanity. Certainly, since she it is who rears the coming men for the coming battles, and the coming daughters to be the coming mothers of the succeeding generation. I am aware that some classes of women despise this doctrine, but that does not injure its soundness. See how anxious our Roman Catholic friends are to have the training of the young children. Not all the armies and navies in the world can do for the universal peace and goodwill on earth what one generation of wise and holy mothers can do. Show me a man who has accomplished great things, good or ill, and you shall also show me one, with perhaps rare exceptions, who has had either a good, wise, woman as counsellor, or a crafty, bad, woman to influence him. History teems with illustrations of this fact. A womanhood out of her own sphere and in manhood's sphere would give us a nation of women who were mere burlesques, and men who were almost nonentities; a state of things to make angels weep in pity, and demons smile victoriously. Women, who by the providence of God have not been granted this sacred privilege, motherhood, still may find work in plenty which is of the motherly type of service, viz.: care and instruction of the growing body, and mind, and spirit, of our little ones; and care and service to any suffering

and needy brothers and sisters who are less fortunate than themselves. This idea, worked out in all its bearings, touches deeply social problems of labour and of every kind. After all there is no object of moment on earth excepting the creature man, who was made in the image of God; and who has fallen into that which seems at times much more like the image of the evil one. We who are expected to become temples suitable for the abiding place of the Holy Spirit are of the gravest importance. And woman, it seems, seldom recognizes the gravity of her mission, in the fitting and preparing of the human race for so splendid an accomplishment. And so we see it to be a grave responsibility to bear and train sons and daughters for this divine sonship of the eternal future; where sons or daughters may not be distinguished by sex, where there is no marriage or giving in marriage. Let us therefore use it in a sacred manner, and in no way despise or belittle or degrade its grand mission. But alas, outside of the marriage of moral persons who respect themselves and their vows; and outside of those who are unmarried, and also respect themselves, marriage, and purity of life; I say outside of that state of morality which these exceptions loosely cover, what do we find? I shall not attempt to particularize on this so loathsome topic. It is like some infernal, filthy, ghoulish nightmare. The satanic traffic known as white slavery is being slowly uncovered. The

divorce courts are slowly uncovering another phase of this filthy nightmare. The daily newspapers enlighten us too well on this miserable topic, and the large percentage of illegitimacy in the statistics tells its own tale of shame. There is a noble cleanly mission for our women in this field; first, with the mothers who train our sons and daughters; then, with that noble army of women workers who are already giving of their wealth, or time, or both, to the caring for the fallen, the rescuing of the almost fallen, and the training of the minds of the people in the ways of *real* purity. May God give courage and assistance to these women who are, shall I say, almost the greater mothers of our people. But the inviolate purity of our sons and daughters rests in the atmosphere of that blessed sanctuary of the tempted one—the home. The women who are fashioned like to the Spartan mothers are of more value economically to a nation than a thousand times the number of females who are of that travestied type of womanhood, the Amazons. I do not assert about women *inferiority* to men, but I do claim that it is a suicidal, a perverted instinct, that leads many of our women to desire to usurp the man's place. It is suicidal in three ways: It is a serious injury to the pre-natal conditions of our children that mothers should be filled with the excitement, and often hatred, of party strife; and that nursing children should be nourished on the poisoned milk of anger and excitement, instead of

kindness and peace; and that these children should become accustomed in their daily life to hearing the party jargon of illogical and often quite unbalanced prejudiced party quarrel. *Like parents, like children.* But if the mother has righteousness, human kindness, and a calm, peaceful sense of security in God's goodness, that all wrongs will be righted soon by the grace of God, and trains her sons and daughters to hope and expect the same, and instils in their very souls a desire for this holy national atmosphere, would not this be better economically for our country? *Like parents, like children.* An angel might covet the privilege of a woman when she, like our loved Spartan mothers, rears her sons for the battle of life, not merely the battle of the getting of bread, but the getting of righteousness on the earth; when she rears her daughters, not merely to fill a good social position, but to feel responsibility as an assisting, nay training, influence of the individual souls of a great people. She, like these ancient noble women will hand to them the shield for the battle of life, and say with them, "With it, or upon it!"

The battle is fierce and the struggle is intense. Righteousness is not for the weak, nor is victory to the careless and indifferent. Every day, every act, is pregnant either with destroying influence, or reconstructing inspiration, towards the city of the risen Christ, a city wherein no evil dwells. Oh, it is a time for true men to be wise as well as brave

and strong. Oh, it is high wisdom when the battle is raging the most fiercely to look for a moment far away into the long future which we all hope for, and try to catch a ray of that divine inspiration which has so long been the stay and strength of the saints of God. This patience, or better, stedfastness, of which we read so frequently in our instructive Scriptures, is our great need. We must be wise to see what is taking place, we must watch. We must learn "what God is like." "And in the darkest battle-field we shall know where to strike." "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love." This text is so rich and full of meaning that we could wish it were engraved on the inner spirit of every one who professes the Faith as it is in Christ Jesus. We are inclined to sympathize with the old philosopher who went about searching for a man. Was there ever a time when the nation needed *real men* more than to-day? And, thank God, I think that even the old philosopher, with his lantern and his cynicism, would find a few wise and valiant souls to-day whom we may think of as real men, and whom we must confess are quitting themselves as such. We are in grave need of citizens ready to support in every possible way those who are trying to bring about righteousness in our nation. There is occasion here for wisdom and valour. This is the separating time, the time when righteousness is to be

separated from wickedness. It is wise to fight on the eternally winning side. To do otherwise is to perish foolishly. God says,

"And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make man more rare than fine gold, even a man than the pure gold of Ophir."

If a *real man* is rare, where shall we find him? But we were not told what his social position in life was to be, and how shall we know a real man when we see one? I should say that we could only know him by his *conformity to type*, and not from his *social position*. God made our first parents in His Own image, and He pronounced them to be good.

Long after our first parents fell into the sinful state, God, shall I say, projected another perfect creation in the image of God, Jesus Christ. The first Adam was ignorant, we must see it, of the consequences of disobedience to God's voice. So he fell and dragged the race down with him. *Like parents, like children.* After long experience, of some effort upwards, and much falling downwards, God sent His Perfect One, in order that we might have a chance once more to *conform to type.* Adam had the appalling power of giving the seed of *mortality* to his offspring. The Perfect One was given the divine power of drawing us upwards

towards our original sinlessness and innocence and *immortality*. But we have eaten of the tree of knowledge of Good and Evil. This we cannot undo. And neither could, nor did, the Perfect One undo it in Himself or in us. So, in Adam we were a perfect type, but ignorant of good and evil. So, in Christ, we must be brought back to *conformity to type*, not in our ignorance, but in full knowledge of good and evil, with Adam's gained knowledge augmented by the experience of thousands of years of miserable failure as sinners. Then fully knowing right from wrong we shall by our obedience to the word of God, and by closing the ear to Satan, *revert to type*. We have Christ to conform to.

"For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power."

This quotation is to me a sort of "clearing-house" of our faith. A place wherein all efforts are adjudicated and balanced. Are we making headway towards our type, or are we to-day at a loss? In Adam we disobey, we fall, we die. In Christ we obey, we rise, we live. Do our deeds accord with our faith? If so, we are beginning to live; if not,

we are still dying. It is in this matter of *deeds* that our knowledge of what is good and what is evil is called into requisition. The more we know the more culpable we are in being disobedient; the more satisfactory it will be for us if we are obedient to the reverting order. So we find the battle-field to be the ground between right and wrong; and not between partyisms of any sort. He who strives to fill in this battle-ground with paltry and selfish partyisms reminds us of our friends the Thibetans, who, we are told, were accustomed to throw evil-smelling objects at the unwelcome intruder. Partyism can be, and is, very offensive; but is mostly petty and futile in its fighting qualities. It is of little use in the great struggle between right and wrong, but is a powerful factor in preventing the clearer vision of a people; a vision which would result in the full acknowledgment that God is Right, and therefore Right must win, and that it is the greatest of human privileges to stand firm on God's side in this fiercely active battle which is raging to-day in our State. And it is according to how we quit ourselves in this crucial day, that we shall be known to be utter failures, or *real men and women*, acting nobly in the strife.

We have been emphasizing the deep and vital importance of motherhood, perhaps the more because we see, even in most estimable mothers, a tendency to think of the life of the woman in the

home as being rather a sort of inferior position to men, or to women who have greater publicity. I pray that this will speedily be seen to be a mistaken idea, born of her God-given instinct to desire to do something towards the bringing of our people back to the type of our Image, a state for which our Mother Eve is principally responsible. But she should do her work as Eve did hers, with this difference; Eve was ignorant of the importance of her deed, woman to-day is not. So, to-day woman has the joy of knowing that by her helpful influence shall we all be able to conform to our original type, if she be obedient to Christ, and thus becomes endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The average man has a call to bravery that perhaps few realize. His position is the counterpart of the woman's. Hers the motherhood, his the fatherhood; hers the monotonous routine of the average home, his the monotonous routine of the average business life. While the physical law of being does not demand so great personal care from the father as from the mother, still he does, or should, dominate the whole family life. He is not only father of his own children, but he is father, good or evil, to all young persons who come within the radius of his influence. How often we see young sons watch to see what their father does, says, and thinks. He is moulding their young impressible minds, whether he wishes to or not. And youths with whom he comes in contact; how

often we may observe the influence of an employer taking effect. A modern business man is in many instances a person of appalling responsibility. Take one of our large establishments where great numbers of young men and women are employed, and sift out this employer's influence for good or evil, and in some known instances it is truly discouraging. We have so much of the evil of this *herding together* of the young men and women brought to the surface, that we shall not attempt to do more than to draw attention to its danger. Loneliness, want of means to live as they should be able to live, gradual breaking down of high moral standards between the sexes, temptation towards dishonesty, etc., all tend to destroy, or at least disfigure, the Image of God in our young. Every employer is, from the larger vision, father to all his employees. If he be a true manly man, he will struggle to keep his young men and women pure and honest. The dishonesty of the commercial world is so firmly fixed in the modern mind, that we do not much expect to find true fairness in business dealing. And yet we may scarcely ascribe this evil to modern life only, as the writer of the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus says, "Two sorts of callings have appeared to me hard and dangerous; a merchant shall hardly keep himself from doing wrong; and a huckster shall not be freed from the sin of his lips." It is indeed hard not to do *wrong* in commercial affairs, and not to

sin with the lips when offering various goods for sale. If a man is trained to absolute integrity in his home, he has a fierce fight before him, to keep that priceless quality inviolate in the business life which lies before the average business man. It would seem easier for the mechanic and agriculturist to be straightforward, as there seems to be less temptation, unless it is in the making of inferior or "shoddy" articles of the former, and the petty tricky dishonesties of the latter. But we oftener, I think, find character and thoughtfulness in the average mechanic and agriculturist (classing loosely) than in the buyer and seller; perhaps only because temptation is so much less. But he who finds himself in the most dangerous post of the battle-field must be the braver and wiser; that is all that is left for him to do. There is, hurrying along, a movement towards this purification in the matter of purity of products, and of buying and selling of the necessities of life. The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof, and the Lord will not for long allow to continue these adulterations of foods, and dishonest trickery in all phases of commerce, which now obtains. We thank God from our very inner hearts for any *real* exceptions to these accusations. That some are attempting to clean up these Augean stables we all know; and this gives hope to our, sometimes, almost hopeless souls. The poor man is often expected to do that from which his spirit revolts—

but he must have bread for his family. It is not so difficult to conceive why "labour agitators" are as a rule so often in a "paroxysm of rage" at the state of things which now obtains amongst us. But wise clean-cut work is even better; though many of us find ourselves in a mental state of this *raging character* when we see so much that could be remedied if men were only a trifle more just, and a trifle more brave, in their endeavours to help to bring righteousness on the face of the earth, instead of more wealth into their already overfat bank accounts.

On the weak foolishness of this great mass, the average citizen, lives the, so-termed, professional class. We must all agree that all our professional men largely live on the foolishness of the mass. The transfer of property and kindred transactions would be but poor faring for all the lawyers who we know are now usually making fat livings in our State. If people were righteous and just in their dealings with one another, how their vintage would fail, especially if we held all property in common, *as did the early Christians*. So we cannot hope for that profession, excepting *a few* brave ones, to help much towards Peace on Earth, Goodwill towards men, can we? It is unreasonable to expect it.

The medical profession certainly lives mainly on the arrant foolishness of the common mass, on the one side, and the inability of the Church to heal

the sick, on the other. Every vice, no matter of what class, seems incidentally to give the physician employment. The useless, luxurious life which the idle rich live, and the unemployed, squalid life which the idle poor live, tend alike to sickness, accident, and disease. Our unnatural mode of eating affords still more work for them. Some of us eat food that is too rich or is unsuitable; some of us eat too little food of any kind: we cannot get it to eat. We have also become a flesh-gorging people, a sort of polite type of carnivora, which we were never made to become, without punitive results. God said to Adam at the dawn of our day when all was fair and lovely, "Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food." Then follows that He had also given it to the beasts to eat. And God saw that it was very good. Then, after that, came the Fall, through ignorant disobedience; and the earth became filled with violence. And after that, He told them they could eat the flesh of beasts and fish and fowls for food, with the exception of the blood, which is the life. We may presume the case that these violent peoples had taken to eating uncooked gory flesh. I shall leave this field of service to our much respected friends, the Food Reformers, who are doing so much to purify the bodies and minds of our people by calling grave

attention to our foods. Personally, I see it to be scriptural that when we become conformed to type, and back to the stature of our Image, as it was in Eden's dawn, we shall abhor the cruelty and gore of the shambles; as we are not by nature carnivora, even the lion shall yet eat straw like the ox. I think that at times God gives us licence to take plenty of some evil thing that we desire, in order to teach us lessons. And we learn at great cost often, as did the wanderers of the wilderness with their lust for flesh. But we must not look to our average physicians to assist in food or other kindred reforms. If we could each and all labour comfortably, and eat wisely, of the purest of foods, we should, I am much afraid, seriously injure their calling. I have no word of censure for the physician who spends his very existence in a kindly endeavour to remove the sickness and suffering of the people; and we must as yet be thankful for his timely aid. Still, we should not expect to find the profession of law or medicine in much prominence in the Holy City on Earth, when it arrives, a city wherein there is not pain or crying or any evil thing. And we must needs, I presume, consider the position of the officer in our Army and Navy as that of a profession. While we grant that until Christ be formed within us we can do better cleansing work within our State while well guarded from encroachment from without, yet it almost touches our sense of humour to think

of having officers of the army and navy strutting proudly about in the Holy City. The training of our young *to kill one another cleverly*, we can scarcely conceive of as being an occupation fitting for the inhabitants of this so peaceful an abiding place. We should, we think, be very appreciative of all those men who are learned in valuable knowledge of all sorts in this redeemed State to be. We should expect no opposition to true progress from learned men of all classes, *who are without special, selfish interests at stake*, in this reconstructing labour towards our highest possibilities as mankind. And the profession of the clergy in our State! Is it in its entirety and without doubt earnestly engaged in taking the Kingdom of Heaven by violence; or is it indifferently acquiescing in a miscarriage of the teaching and commands of Christ? There are many reasons that contribute to this grave hindrance to our religious life; this falseness of our spiritual guides, which is so prevalent and so disastrous. First, and pre-eminently foremost, is the fact that so large a percentage of men go into the "Church" as they go into the other professions, merely as a vocation that will bring them means to live upon, and at the same time secure them a good social position. Certainly, many will have mental qualities suitable for their calling, but one has only to attend many of the smaller parish churches to find utter inadequacy for so responsible a position. In Nonconformity

the average mental quality seems to be much higher, perhaps because this class is largely drawn from a stronger phase of our race, "the middle class," and also from the circumstances of *call* to the vocation. There must be at least some ability in a man or he will soon become a shepherd without sheep in Nonconformity. I am not aware that the State Church demands what we may call "conversion" in its incumbent; nor perhaps does Nonconformity make a testing point of it to-day. Certainly all of both classes are accepted as Christians in belief; but not in a way that will closely and searchingly differentiate between men, who being nominal Christians feel inclined to preach the doctrine of some particular sect, and men, who being cleansed by the purifying fires of repentance and also filled with the Holy Spirit, are called by the commanding voice of God to preach the Evangel of Jesus the Redeemer of men. If all our preachers were to try themselves, each his own soul, by this test, as being fit or unfit for the vocation of the ministry of the Word, I fear that there would be a most alarming and significant evacuation of our pulpits, of all persuasions: and we also feel assured, that next Lord's Day morning a goodly sprinkling would still be found meekly and firmly standing in their accustomed places, still ready to preach the word with at least *a little* power. *These few*, of whom we have before been speaking, are our hope. If *these few*, be they Churchmen or

Nonconformists, will but watch, stand fast, and quit them like strong men, and do all in a spirit of love, what an awakening we shall have. And this must come or else we are a lost race.

To an irresponsible aristocracy, or to the degenerate driftwood of our people, it is well nigh useless to appeal; but to all other classes of our sons and daughters, in the name of my Saviour, do I appeal to you to decide this day whom ye will serve. If ye consent that God it is Whom ye will serve, then I appeal to you, no matter whether you be in high or low position, to consider yourselves from a new standpoint. Ye must be born anew (or from above) in order to be able to serve God this day; this day of fiercest conflict between right and wrong, the two opposing influences which respectively lead to our reconstruction or our destruction. And so do I cry out my appeal to us all, every man, woman, and child, to listen with his inner ear for the call of God the Father and Creator, to do each his own duty, his own service to a sin-sick world. And I feel no reluctance in saying that the appeal that I cry to us all is from the Spirit of Truth which is sent forth amongst us by that Christ Who came to save the people from their sins. I feel that I can say with Him, and without irreverence, "Believe me for the very work's sake," for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.

The Kingdom is within the heart, and is acquired by violence to our old methods, aims, and habits.

When heaven is within each of us it will also be a visibly outward kingdom; who could see it otherwise? Then it is obviously our first duty to repent, and clean each his own mind and heart; and lift his own standpoint of life up into an eternal futurity *and then work as the world never saw men work before.* And our work will be varied according to our call. Our call will be according to our vision. Our vision will come to us by the circumstances of our birth, training, environment, culture, or lack of culture; but each in his own place, doing his own work. We do not erect monuments to soldiers who die of *shots in the back.* The humblest private is expected to stand the fire of the enemy. We can learn a good lesson from these disciplined men, and "stand like the brave with our face to the foe," no matter what form the foe may assume. And no child is too young to begin to learn Right from Wrong—after he is once aware of himself as a human entity. No man or woman is too obscure or ignorant for this noble service; as has many a time been illustrated by work thus accomplished. The victory is sometimes to the weak and foolish. But how vastly greater may be, and is, the influence of those who are splendidly equipped, as some of our leading spirits are. And what excellent service many of them are now doing. May God give them skill to know just "where to strike." All work is honourable if it be righteous service; and no two can do precisely the same thing. But

each accordingly as he is called of God. "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; but each shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow-workers; ye are God's husbandry, God's building." This should give us that stedfastness which will enable us, from greatest to least, to stand firm and quit us like real men, made in the image of God, and made, not for suicidal selfishness, but for eternally self-preserving service for the souls of men.

"But it is to you, ye workers, who do already work, and are as grown men, noble and honorable in a sort, that the whole world calls for new work and nobleness. Subdue mutiny, discord, widespread despair, by manfulness, justice, mercy, and wisdom. Chaos is dark, deep as hell; let light be, and there is instead a green flowery world. Oh, it is great, and there is no other greatness. To make some nook of God's creation a little fruitfuller, better, more worthy of God; to make some human hearts a little wiser, manfuller, happier, more blessed, less accursed! It is work for a God. . . . Unstained by wasteful deformities, by wasted tears, or hearts-blood of men, or any defacement of the Pit, noble fruitful labour, growing ever nobler, will come forth—the grand sole miracle of man; whereby man has risen from the low places of this earth, very literally into divine heavens. . . . All martyrs, and noble men and gods are of one grand host, immeasurable: marching ever forward since the beginnings of the world. The

enormous, all-conquering, flame-crowned Host, noble every soldier in it; sacred and alone noble. Let him who is not of it hide himself; let him tremble for himself."

Carlyle.

CHAPTER XII

"BEHOLD THE MAN"

"And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man! When therefore the chief priests and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Take him yourselves, and crucify him: for I find no crime in him."

JOHN xix. 5, 6.

"And when they came unto the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left hand. And Jesus said, Father forgive them; for they know not what they do."

LUKE xxiii. 33, 34.

"For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame." HEBREWS vi. 4.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself. JOHN xii. 32.

GOD has painted us in the Scriptures, general history, and in human life, as we find it to-day, a picture that requires more than a hurried glance or a microscopic examination of one tiny detached portion in order that we may see, even

dimly, some of its (I believe) extraordinary wise design, and incomparable beauty of workmanship, and eternally satisfying inspiration for a soul's attainment Godward. In looking upon this vast and seemingly awful picture, we do not always feel satisfied that God the Creator was justified in pronouncing His work of creation to be good. We often inwardly feel rebellious; and some of us confess it with our lips or pen. Unbelievers are not slow to belittle the management of mankind—as they see it. Professing Christians, of the very prevalent nominal sort, say as little as they can on the subject, not wishing to bring the Faith, as they see it, into disrepute; and feeling that they cannot adequately reason away this seeming mismanagement of the race by the Creator. *The Few*, who are, shall we say, illumined by the Spirit of God sufficiently to appreciate the various workings of Providence in affairs that they can in a measure understand, feel that they actually know by certain of the scientific laws of analogy, etc., as applied to this particular theme, that the Creator is sure as life itself to have some greater, more magnificent scheme, wherein this short earth-season is but the broken chord of a glorious processional, wherein the whole design shall not only satisfy our pitifully doubting souls, but will also fill us eternally with holy awe and unspeakable joy of being. This smaller and knowable sketch we may perhaps find to be a prophetic sketch of the whole grand vista

of long, and continued, and now unknowable, history of our race.

Souls who realize this, feel that Job was wise when he said in the midst of his calamities, "Though he slay me, yet will I wait for him." Though in sad complaint he still further moans out his misery to his well meaning tormentors,

"Oh, that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to his seat. . . . Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, when he doeth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him. But he knoweth the way that I take; when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

Poor afflicted Job in his anguish of body and mind still continued to pour forth his lament until at length Jehovah Himself answered him, and in such a way that this rather self-righteous sufferer was silenced. Then Jehovah counselled Job thus, "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me." "Wilt thou even annul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be justified?" At length Job's pride and blindness were conquered, and once more he addressed himself to Jehovah thus, "I know that thou canst do all things, and that no purpose of thine can be restrained. Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge?

Therefore have I uttered that which I understood not. . . . Wherefore I loathe my words and repent in dust and ashes." And this weird tale of soul agony ends by telling us that Jehovah blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. At least some lessons are to be learnt from the significant experience of this historic character. We find that he suffered because he was righteous, *not because he was wicked.* We find that he suffered a short while with God's full consent, to testify to Satan that his integrity was real and strong enough to withstand temptation. It leaves us a most convincing, although pre-eminently poetical, illustration of how entirely dependent we are on God's care, and how nothing of His will can miscarry, and yet leaves us a clear vision of how important the soul of a man is in God's, and even Satan's sight. That soul's Will to do right, though all help and opportunity seems to fail—that this will sooner or later result in the consciousness of God's approval, and will secure a happier future for the stedfast trusting soul, is perhaps the widest, the most significant lesson to be appreciated in its study. It seems to be a key by which we may open the door of our hopes on a wider vista of happier experiences. We must see it that there is no lesson that we need for to-day's requirements so much as we do this gift of the wider vision, this vision that sees to-day as a moment of an eternal day. A moment only perhaps, but it might by God's

infinite wisdom be a moment of vast issues, as some moments are in times of crises; and we may well see that it is thus so to-day, if we be not blind to contemporary history. Job was commanded by God to gird up his loins now like a man. Perhaps our season of loss and misery and sores of horrible loathsomeness is about to be lifted by the Providence of God. "Perhaps," we said. Better it were to affirm that by the grace of God and His unfailing promises, it *shall* be. When Job was tested sufficiently, and was found to be still trusting in his God, his misery was removed. He repented of his self-righteousness, he loathed his foolishness, and he prayed that his tormenting Pharisaical friends might also be restored from their folly.

Perhaps there is nothing so remarkable in human history as our attempted allegiance to God, or what each individual and people conceive to be God. All people, no matter how barbaric and crude they may be in their customs, have some idea of appeasing or beseeching favour from some Influence which we know means God. And there is a strong likeness in primitive conceptions of God. We do not know whether or no there exists infidelity in these primitively religious peoples or not. We should judge not much. We think that infidelity is more prevalent in our Christendom than in any other cultus. If this is true—and there is abounding circumstantial evidence that it

is true—why is this? I think that the secret of it lies between two phases of our world spirit to-day; on the one hand we see the seeming miscarriage of God's scheme at the dawn of Eden; and on the other we do *not* see that this initial experience may be but a moment of discord in an eternal harmony. If we see Man's fall apart from the design of the Creator, we must, if we be honest, see it to be absolute failure of the Creator's plans. From our lessons of Job's troubles we should learn that, *God the Creator does use Satan to test the courage and sincerity of humanity*. But modern culture says, God cannot *permit* evil. Jehovah God Himself says, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil; I am Jehovah that doeth all these things." Shall we dictate to our Maker as to just which experience He shall give each of us? Shall we strive with our Maker as to His methods with us?

If this life ended all existence, it were indeed a failure, but we have hope of everlasting life, which alters the case entirely. We ought to see this more plainly. God's methods do not require apology; but they do require that we try to understand His standpoint a little more nearly; so that we may be willing creatures in His moving scheme. We are first to be *born anew from above*, and then to go on *from perfection unto perfection*. After we fell, through our ignorance, into the temptation of Satan, our Creator promised that in due time He

would send one of us out into this sin-sick world who should restore the fallen race. We of the Christian Faith feel assured that such an One came, and He came at the time that was foretold. Some say that His mission failed; but that also rises from the shorter vision. It was at a still later date that these earthly kingdoms were to become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. This has not yet taken place. This it is to which the world is ripening fast. This it is for which we hope, and pray, and work, if we be embryo Sons of God.

This perfect Son of God was, as we have said, *projected* amongst us as was foretold, in order that we might once more have a perfected Image of God to look upon until we become like Him. But not for this alone; since He also taught us the gravest of all lessons, and the bitterest—the sacrifice of ourselves for others. Not only are we indebted to Him for the showing forth of these saving qualities, but He was given full authority over the souls of our race. There is nothing to-day so important to human existence as our vision of this Christ of God. All the great Scripture artists have depicted His appearance. All the prophet-poets have sung in sorrowful pathos of His weary lingering way to His final triumphant victory over sin and death; and have also sung in joyful strain of the happier finish of this so sorrowful a journey. These artists and prophet-poets have given us a

perfect picture of a perfect man doing a perfect work for a perfect Father God, and for, I firmly believe, a yet to be perfect race. As by our inexperienced forefathers we fell into sin, and by sin death, so by Him Who gave Himself in perfect manner for us shall we live and grow from perfection unto perfection in His perfectness.

All history, whether it be scriptural or otherwise, ancient or contemporary, points to our fallen state, and calls for a return to sane obedience. The Voice of the Creator has re-instructed us in the giving forth of His Son. The sin-sick world is to-day, in all its theologies, schools, systems of social reform, and scientific reconstruction of our race as human beings in the individual, also pointing to this Fall; and yet they do not point too readily to the one remedy for all our ills. We think that presently, all these schools that are vaguely feeling out after the coming Kingdom and its Hero Sovereign, will awaken and look around, taking in the larger vista, taking in their vision the eternal process, seeing the Lord Christ as centre of all hopes, aims, and aspirations; that they and all will soon with one united voice cry out to a weary world, "Behold the Man." *Ecce Homo* is the name given to many conceptions of Jesus Christ by our medieval and more modern artists.

Ecce Homo! Yes, but how shall we behold this so perfect Brother of ours? We see in a picture

that which we are capable of understanding in it. And so with our vision of Christ. If one has been fortunate enough to have seen that magnificent Thing which ties my native land to the United States of America, the Falls of Niagara, he will find that his first view is very disappointing. It does not look immense enough to satisfy his expectations. If he remain in its presence for some length of time, he will find that his vision of it is filling out, enlarging, magnifying itself, until at length he comes to realize that he is in the presence of tremendous compelling force, and of majestic and awe-inspiring beauty. If he approach it from the point where its rushing waters sink wearily into the lovely lake below, if he is carried up and up, just over its rapid edge through that unforgettable cleft in a cyclopean rock as he approaches nearer and yet nearer, the view is fearful and splendid. One feels as if he were being drawn into the alluring clasp of some mythic, vapour-draped, rainbow-crowned, living, pulsing, Thing. *And it is a living Thing.* Puny man has thrown chains of scientific skill around the great creature, and it is now throbbing out some of its heretofore wasted force over my native land, to give light and power to the people. Only the Poet saw the Thing for long ages. At length it chanced that the Utilitarian saw it. The result is that it is throbbing out light and mechanical force to the people. The Poet loved the beauty

of it, the Utilitarian claimed the right to use the strength of it for the serving of the people. This giant is composed of ordinary rock and the ordinary waters of our "great lakes" in contact. Its uniqueness arises from its largeness, its splendid beauty, and also now from its Utilitarianism.

As we have said, we see in a picture that which we are able to respond to. And so we see Christ with as wide a vision as we are possessed of. For long ages, the poet has worshipped the beauty of the person of our Redeemer—and may God in His mercy grant that we may never thus cease to be poets—but to-day is the day of the triumph of the Utilitarian, even in our vision of the Blessed One. We have worshipped His nativity, His earth life, His anguish and dying passion. We have worshipped His memory in wellnigh the same spirit as though He were a mythic god, instead of the risen, reigning, Redeemer of the souls of men. The artist-poet has in adoration written through centuries *Ecce Homo*. The prophet-poet has also in adoration written through centuries upon centuries, "Behold the Man." The prophet-poet foresketched the coming, not only of the weary way, but also of the triumphant finish, the coming of the Blessed One to His Own. And His Kingdom, they told us, was to be a blessed state of mankind, in which listening obedience was to bring us back to our primal purity, never again to err through ignorant disobedience. This is the age, in the

Christian dispensation, of the Utilitarian. Let us use the strength and vital force of the risen Christ to give our people light and strength for accomplishing our perfection; and so only shall we become enlightened with His Light, and shall we become perfected by His Perfection. With those words on our breastplate we shall become an invincible enemy to destruction, and an invaluable support to the reconstructive policy of our coming Hero-Sovereign. We are invited to take His burden upon us, and we are tenderly assured that it will not be heavy if we are yoked with Him. And in so doing we are promised rest to our weary souls. We shall abide in His triumphant restfulness, we shall sing with the sweet-voiced Mrs. Browning, "And I smiled to think God's greatness flowed around our incompleteness—round our restlessness, His rest."

We had better watch for His approach, for He left word to us thus:

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching; verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants."

It were shortsighted folly not to watch. If we watch events and thought-trends, as they are passing in swift panoramic vision before us to-day,

we shall see that our long day is reaching a climactic crisis. It pleased Jehovah to bruise the Blessed One, and put Him to grief; but when we make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied; by the knowledge of Himself shall He justify many, and He shall bear their iniquities. When we as a Christian people, each in his own soul, see that Christ's purpose was, and now is, to cleanse our souls from the death-producing unsoundness of sinning, we shall begin to look about us in an endeavour to use in all conceivable ways this limitless strength of the Son of God towards the reconstruction of our systems of living, in order that it may become possible for us to attain, as a whole people, to the desirable status wherein we may sanely take into consideration whether it may be a not too visionary thing to formulate our code of moral laws in exact accordance with the grand ultimate morality of a restored mankind. We must see the Messiah as One Who serves the race; aye, the One Who saves the race. God has set His watchman on the walls of spiritual Jerusalem.

"They shall never hold their peace day nor night; ye that are Jehovah's remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. . . . Go through

the gates; prepare ye the way of the people . . . gather out the stones; lift up an ensign for the peoples." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself."

He was cruelly lifted up from the earth—and crucified—and ever since, the world has been in a measure and in a certain manner drawn towards Him. But we have seen Him far too much as Martyr than as reigning King, or as heir-apparent, who is waiting for the ripening of His Father's plans.

A king may be a great man in some way of personal attainment, as a man, though he be ruler over the tiniest of kingdoms; but he cannot be a great king unless he have great empire over which to rule. A king may be a very poor sort of a man, and yet may be ruler over a great empire to whose greatness he has not contributed, but perhaps the reverse. But given a great man, and a great empire, we should look for a splendid result. We have looked upon our Saviour as a great man, a great martyr, and some of us have looked upon Him as a wellnigh automatic portion of the Father's scheme of atonement for our sins. We have acknowledged that He was great in His willingness to acquiesce in the will of His Father, or rather the reconciling *demands* of His Father God. We have acknowledged that He taught a splendid code of morals, and have, shall we say, shrugged our shoulders at the idea of trying to follow it. We

have remembered that He is before the Throne of God, interceding for our shortcomings and spiritual infirmities, and have so taken licence, and continued to be short of righteousness, and infirm in our spirits. We have hopes that when we die, we shall be taken into His presence, and receive His warm and loving commendation—for our weak-kneed faith. We trust in His precious blood that was shed for us to make us whole—quite forgetting the real cause and the purifying process of His mission. We weave around His person and mission all sorts of doctrinal and ritualistic winding sheets, until to many of us, *Christianity is but a name for our hereditary cultus*. We grant that all our conceptions of Christ when fitted together give us a picture of, not only a great man, but also give us a faint glimmering of the Majesty of His power as He sits at the right hand of His Father. Great as a man, great as the Son of God, we feel we know that He is; but in Empire do we see Him great as yet?

The kingdoms of the world were to be Satan's until the later times. Christ Jesus had refused them—at Satan's price. We must admit that it was the Will of the Father who created Light and Darkness, Good and Evil, that it should be so. But full authority was Christ's at His ascending to the Father, by way of the cross. And after His experiences in Paradise preceding His Resurrection and Ascension, He said, "I ascend unto my

Father, and your Father." When the Kingdoms of this world shall be the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages, we shall see Him in His full Kingship. He will be completed by His full Empire. A great man must have great Empire before he can be said to be a great king. The further completeness of the greatness of our King is dependent on His increased Empire. His Empire is the Kingdom of Heaven, and He Himself said that it was in the hearts of men. Granted this, then His Kingdom is subject both in quantity and quality to the individual souls or hearts of men. This is why we are said to be made anew in Christ. We are not in His Kingdom unless we are living in His spirit of service. Every soul that has gotten a glimpse of the *lifted up* Son of Man sets himself to attune his life in accordance with the coming régime of the Redeemer of men's souls from sin. He sees the *Utilitarian phase* of the Messianic mission and at once enlists for service. He becomes a soldier of the Cross. From that moment he belongs to Christ's new Kingdom. He will at once be put into training for the fighting of sinful practices amongst us. He will be proud of the great Over-Lord. He will be delighted to be allowed to do the smallest service whilst being trained for greater action. A sovereign does not train his soldiers in person; that is the work of the officers of his army. Christ Jesus said He would send the

Spirit of Truth to us, to bring to remembrance all the things which He taught us.

"He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High; having become by so much better than the angels, as he hath inherited a more excellent name than they. . . . And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire. . . . Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that are heard, lest haply we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels proved stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? Which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will."

It shows us that the angels who are filled with the Holy Spirit are obedient in their service to the Messiah in His redemptive mission to our race. That they minister to us, we are sure; and may we not say that they train us to that service which in Christ Jesus gives us life eternal? If we are heirs to salvation, we are to have this ministry. Also after we have become fitted to receive, we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit *ourselves*. When we have been trained by these holy teachers in

the commands of Christ, we too shall be filled with this Holy Spirit, which permeates their very service, and thus shall the Holy Spirit permeate *our* every action. This is not only our privilege, but a necessity for our salvation. It is most clearly taught. It is thus that we become Temples fit for the indwelling of the Spirit. If we defile ourselves and thus destroy our possibilities of being fit Temples of God we, of course, are destroyed ultimately. We can only continue to live eternally if we be tenanted by the Spirit of God Who is Life.

And thus we must behold the risen Redeemer, as King of a Universal Empire, of which the soul of a man is the unit. We must see that there is no eternal work excepting the saving of souls for this Kingdom. There is no saving of souls for this Kingdom except by saving them from sinning. This was that which the angels claimed to be the mission of the child Jesus before His birth, "For it is he that shall save his people from their sins." Christ's Kingdom is composed of sinless souls. Christ's work has been, and is, to gather such souls together in training for this sinless life. I do not claim that either of us can live without the many errors of conduct that to our fellows look like wilful sinning, but I do contend, that all of us can so live as to be conscious of no desire except to be utterly and absolutely obedient to the risen Saviour. I do contend this to be possible; for else how shall

Christ have a Kingdom? As soon as a man joins the army he is a soldier. He is ignorant of military discipline, but if he is a rightminded person he will obey and try to understand all discipline as quickly as he can. He must be trained, but he is a soldier from the start. A young man goes to learn a trade. He subjects himself to the required training at once. He is from the day of entering known to be a carpenter, painter, or machinist. He has perhaps as yet acquired but little knowledge of his calling, but if he be true to it he will eventually come out of training well equipped for his work. And so if we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, and also as the Redeemer of the whole race—as we know of the race—we shall at once put ourselves into His keeping without reserve, to do with us as He will, and never doubt but that all which comes in the way of experience and discipline is wisely and kindly sent us. We shall come to regard our many experiences with the interest of the young apprentice. We shall be constantly reminding ourselves that everything that we do is meant to be a lesson learnt. Life becomes of divine significance when viewed in this light. A little child will often cry to its parents, Oh, do let me try to do this or that, I am sure I can do it. These little ones are so delighted and filled with justifiable pride on the performance of some small new piece of service. I wish we could imbibe more of the simple trusting, attaining

spirit of these little ones. No wonder The Master said that we must become like them. "Of such is the Kingdom of God."

Everything in the Scriptures points to the Kingdom of Heaven, or the heavenly state into which man's mind should eventually turn, as contrasted with man's mind as it has been, and now is. In ordinary warfare, the foe, as a rule, is outside of the kingdom. In some, nay, many cases, the warfare is between divisions within the nation. But where shall you show me another kingdom wherein warfare arises between a man's habits of mind and body, and his own soul? In the great kingdoms of the world, national greatness has usually arisen from some one dominant spirit by whom the mass of men who go to compose the nation are either driven, or led, or both. In the Kingdom of Heaven, certainly Christ is *eminently dominant*, and urges and leads the children of the Kingdom along. But there is this difference, the urging and leading is towards the holy self-sacrificing sinless life; and not to avarice and bloodshed. There is in the Kingdom of Heaven nothing but holiness and happiness, in their many workings, to secure. There is nothing to kill but sin and death, in all their manifold workings. In worldly kingdoms we have our Royal Lines, our older and newer nobility, our masses or middle class, our artisans, etc., and our poor. An amusing series of differentiating phases in social status, precedence, etc., lies

between king and pauper. In the Kingdom of Heaven this does not exist. Certainly we find that Christ has a government parallel in a way to an earthly government. We read in Revelation about the many authoritative angels, and the four and twenty elders, the saints, etc. But all those who overcame were to inherit the Kingdom with the conquering Anointed One, were to be joint heirs with Him. If we attain to this Royal Degree, we must attain to it as He did, by prayers, strong crying, tears, and obedience. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." So if we be not each called upon to be in the Messianic government, we each have a right, and call, to become Sons of God, joint heirs with Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit. This surely is honour enough for a human soul to aspire to, and to give him incentive for his very best efforts.

And thus in a humble spirit, but in full assurance that we are led by the Spirit of Truth, do we appeal to those who profess to believe in, and follow the religion that has come to be called Christianity.

"God, God!
With a child's voice I cry,
Weak, sad, confidingly—
God, God!
Thou knowest, eyelids, raised not always up
Unto Thy love (as none of ours are), droop
As ours, o'er many a tear."

We essay only to do that which countless others have also endeavoured to do, *i. e.* to bring to the attention of the modern mind the importance of our day and generation, and the importance of individual life and effort; and of the almost complete uselessness of individual effort without correct aim, careful preparation for service and stedfastness of purpose in that service, in the full knowledge of the succour, support, and direction of the risen Christ. We must become temples holy and undefiled, and fit for the service of the eternal Father. We must, as a whole people, be builded together, a habitation that shall be a suitable abiding place for the indwelling Spirit of God. We must awaken from the deep sleep that has overtaken our souls while we have waited in the night for the appearance of the Bridegroom. We must follow the teaching and commands of the risen Christ, as well as trust in His atoning power. We must be so consistent with our significant name that it shall be no sarcasm to call us Christians. If we so believe and so obey, we shall do the same marvellous works that the Messiah did, and that He gave His disciples power to do. We have these gifts but to little extent, because we have not this obedient belief in the Founder of our Faith.

The unfailing signs of our belief are found *wanting* to-day; therefore it is evident that we do not fully believe. And the world knows that we do not fully believe; and while perhaps fearing us,

still holds our inconsistency in derision. Do we as yet love one another? And yet this is the test by which men shall know whether or not we are Christians. Alas, we have inherited this dreadful taint of Cain, the desire to slay our brother. And we still make enormous preparations for this unholy instinct to spend itself. Thank the pitiful Father that our Statesmen are coming to see this vast outlay, which would well feed and clothe our poorest little ones, more as an instrument to prevent this awful slaughter than for the accomplishment of it. We thank Him also that our people are coming to see that he who does not save his brother's life if he can, slays him. We are surely awakening to our responsibility as to the weaker, more unfortunate ones, and few of us would dare to-day to cry—at least aloud—"Am I my brother's keeper?" for we have come to realise that to be a real citizen of a nation is indeed to be our brother's keeper; that this alone is true citizenship. When we turn our half-awakened eyes upon systems and usages as they prevail in their destructive mission to-day, we are stricken with remorse and shame. We are ashamed of the prodigality of our wasted resources of the past; we see that if we do not return to sanity we shall decay and pass away as a nation. Already we see our wisest sons of the State saying with one voice, "We will arise and go unto our Father." They are, in *practice*, saying,

"We will repent of all our old loathsome usages which have resulted in so much sinning, suffering, and sickness amongst our brothers of all classes. We will begin by rescuing the most heavily oppressed, and we shall hope, in time, to repent of all our evil ways, and turn to do that which is just and right as a happy and united people; united and happy under Christ in the service of His so perfect coming Kingdom."

When this is accomplished we shall be a nation of clean-souled individuals, each of us, in his own place and time, doing all we can to prepare ourselves and each other for this glorious service. The Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence, and it requires very careful preparation before we are of much service to our overcoming King. We must repent and be cleansed from our wrong desires and instincts and standpoints. We must be born anew from above, so that we shall see all issues from the eternal and infinite standpoint. When we are thus prepared we shall feel that we can walk with obedient confidence, knowing that we shall be guided in all our endeavours by the counsel of the Father, and that we shall always be under His directing eye. We shall thus be "Stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." We shall be encompassed by the loving-kindness of our heavenly Father and His Beloved Son. But we shall also become assured, as our spiritual education is widening our sense of discernment, that we may not hope for particular

and further conscious instruction from our Father, until we learn to be quite obedient to the Light which we now have, the Scriptures. It is these which tell us of the great mission to us of the Light of the World, our Saviour. This obedience to the Light will bring to us the consciousness of having on our breastplates the Light to perceive, and the Perfection which is the result of this obedience. There are many promises of powers or gifts to the disciples of Christ, but until we are obedient to the cleansing of our spirits from all unrighteousness, we cannot hope to do signs and wonders in His name. Himself said to the scoffing religionists, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you." Just as we are able in His name to cast out our particular modern demons, which do so harass us to-day, to that degree is Christ's Kingdom come. Every soul that becomes purified and strengthened to fight against the dread foe, unrighteousness, is a citizen of the new City to be. Every demon of avarice, lust, sickness, want, etc., that is cast forth is giving place to the holier spirits of loving-kindness, purity, plenty, health, and all good gifts. It is a clean and willing hand that can use "The Finger of God." We are told, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." And we are *wisely* warned, "Let all that ye do be done in love." It is indeed difficult to see wisely, to stand fast against seemingly too great

odds; to be strong when the heart is weary with its struggling. It is sometimes the hardest part of all to do all *in love*. I think that the only way in which we poor mortals can obey this difficult word, is to establish our sense of love to man on our pity for him—ourselves included—in his weakness and perverted instinct. We all, like sheep, have gone astray; we are none good, no not one. As we learn to pity each his own inability, so shall we pity our brother. Tender pity is closely akin to the Love of God. So we are told to do all reconstructing service in a spirit of this divine love. We are urged to be *careful* but to be very *strong;* and we are expected each one of us to quit us like men, *real men*. Man was made in the image of God and stood erect, sinless, good. Can we do this as yet? Alas, no. But to this high standard of being we must attain. There is need to be strong in the strength of the ever present Spirit, the Comforter, Whom Christ will send to help us in our need. So, we need not depend entirely upon our own wisdom or strength, but we had better use the highest wisdom we are possessed of, the utmost strength and courage that we can muster, "Then look up, and pray." Think you that the mighty God will fail us? Never. He will point us to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," and command us, "Hear ye him." If we look upon the Lamb of God as He is shown forth in His teaching, and living example, we shall

have such a vision of the sin-sick world, as it now is, left in relief, that we shall pray to be made fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in order that we may, not so much save ourselves, as help the risen Saviour, in ever so humble a way, to save others, the whole race, in any way we are called upon by the monitor within to do. We shall care for no honour in all the world of men other than the honour of being Sons of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ, Temples of the Holy Spirit. We shall see no work as being honourable, excepting it tend towards the Kingdom of Heaven. We shall know that we are created anew in Christ Jesus for these good works. This is the only reason for our existence.

Only by obedient service for the Kingdom are we assured of eternal life. "Know ye not that ye are a Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the Temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are." Do we wish to be Temples of God? If so, will He accept us?

"If I ask Him to receive me,
Will He say me nay?
Not till earth and not till heaven
Pass away.
Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is He sure to bless?
Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
Answer, 'Yes.'"

3477 7

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper proces
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Oct. 2005

PreservationTechnologie
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATI
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 017 043 836 A